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ABSTRACT

This document consists of a consultation paper on extending opportunities and raising standards in the 14-19 phase of England's educational system and the Learning Skills Development Agency's (LSDA's) response to the consultation paper. The consultation argues that the existing 14-19 system fails large numbers of young people and values only a limited range of achievement. A comprehensive vision for reform grounded in the following principles is proposed: (1) all young people and parents must have confidence in the system; (2) every young person must have the chance for a decent education; (3) the education system must match the needs of a knowledge economy; and (4) education with character must be promoted. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the proposed vision, and Chapter 2 explains how the beginning, middle, and end of the 14-19 phase will be marked. Chapters 3-9 discuss the following aspects of the envisioned system: curriculum content; recognizing achievement; pace and progression; advice, guidance, and support for young people; drivers for support and change; implementation; and next steps. An illustrative timetable and key facts are appended. The LSDA response paper expresses the LSDA's overall support for the vision outlined in the consultation paper and answers 49 questions regarding specific passages in that paper. (MN)

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ED 468 439

14-19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards

Consultation Document

[and]

LSDA Responds

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14–19:
extending opportunities, raising standards

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Foreword by Estelle Morris, Secretary of State for Education and Skills

Our aim is nothing less than a world-class education service with standards that match the best in the world, and where all our young people develop the confidence, skills and knowledge that they will need as adults. Our proposal for a new 14-19 phase is an important step towards achieving that goal for our country.

In the last Parliament we said that we would get the basics right in primary schools. We have made an excellent start. Standards of literacy and numeracy have risen sharply. The pledge to reduce infant class sizes to no more than 30 has been delivered. There is further progress to make in primary and early years provision, but the foundations are now secure.

The drive for world-class performance demands that we now modernise secondary education, as we consolidate and extend the growing success of the primary sector.

Bringing about a step-change in performance at secondary level is the top priority for us in the next five years. This Paper on how we deliver education for 14–19 year olds underpins our commitment to this cause. We want to ensure that every secondary school and college is excellent in providing the central core of learning, but also has a distinctive mission and ethos.

In the 20th century the education system was too often a one-size-fits-all structure. It neither demanded nor provided excellent standards in education for everyone. Nor did the education system adequately target the needs of the individual pupil.

In the 21st century, to be prosperous, the economy will depend heavily on the creativity and skills of its people. In a knowledge economy it is vital that we tap the potential of every one of our citizens.

So what young people need from our education system is changing rapidly. We must build a flexible system around the needs and aspirations of individual pupils.

The reforms of the last four years have laid the foundations for this shift:

- we have reached, a year early, our target that half of our young people should get five or more good GCSEs, and A Level standards continue to improve;
- individual pupil-level targeting is now accepted practice in many primary and secondary schools;

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- Learning Mentors provide assistance to individual pupils;

- subject by subject setting enables teachers to meet the talents of individual pupils more effectively;

- ICT allows pupils to take greater control of their own learning.

The 14-19 phase builds on this transition towards greater flexibility and, by modernising the curriculum, puts the needs of the individual learner at the heart of the education system.

The policies we outline in this document have the potential to transform the learning experience of every pupil in secondary education. For too long, vocational studies and qualifications have been undervalued. This must change – we must introduce qualifications and pathways that are of an excellent standard, that deserve and are accorded high status, that are not a sink option for failed students, but which can lead the bright and able through into higher education and beyond.

The need for reform of the 14-19 curriculum in our secondary schools has never been more urgent. There are four central challenges that our country must address if we are to guarantee economic prosperity and social justice for all in this new century.

Our first challenge is to **build an education system in which every young person and every parent has confidence**. It must demand excellence of all, and offer and reward high standards. The choices we are offering must not determine a young person's future irrevocably at 14, but should be flexible enough to allow young people to choose from both academic and vocational routes and switch between options as new interests and aptitudes become apparent. Greater flexibility in the curriculum will also be used to stretch the most able, allowing them to accelerate at 14 and beyond.

Whether young people choose academic, vocational or a mixture of options at 14, there will be a clear ladder of progression. Our aim is clear – keeping young people in education and training at 16, academic excellence, high-quality vocational routes and increased participation in higher education. This will build the foundations for lifelong learning among future generations. It will be a system in which all are valued and all can have confidence.

Secondly, **we must ensure that no young person is denied the chance of a decent education**. Every passing day when a child is unable to fulfil their potential is another day lost, not only to that child but also to the whole community.

Our proposals should engage those young people who have traditionally been alienated and disaffected from school. This year around 5% of our young people did not get any GCSEs at all, and although the proportion of young people getting five or more A*–C grades at GCSE has risen dramatically since 1997, it remains only 50% of the cohort.

No society can tolerate under-achievement on this scale. School must engage every young person. Social inclusion as well as economic prosperity remains a key objective of our 14–19 proposals.

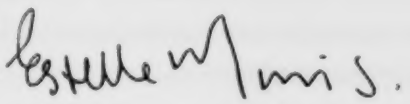
Thirdly, **we must reap the skills benefits of an education system that matches the needs of the knowledge economy**. It is estimated that by 2004 the UK economy will have a skill shortage of 150,000 network ICT workers alone. If our education system does not quickly respond to this demand for new skills the damage to national economic performance will be considerable.

And fourthly, **we must promote education with character**. Academic achievement is essential, but education must also be a basis for citizenship and inclusion. It is important that young people learn to know right from wrong; get along with their fellow students; work in teams; make a contribution to the school or college as a community; and develop positive attitudes to life and work. This is important not only for their own personal development, but also because employers increasingly emphasise not just academic qualifications, but skills and attitudes such as enterprise, innovation, teamwork, creativity and flexibility.

We want every young person to have the chance to be involved in sport, music and the arts, and to play a role in their local community, as well as achieving academically. We have taken steps to increase the opportunities for secondary school children in these areas, and put forward here our proposal for an overarching award which could be used to recognise and reward participation in wider activities.

Taken together, our 14–19 proposals offer a coherent vision for the transformation of secondary education: higher standards; greater diversity of provision; high-quality vocational education; every school and college improving; and every young person able to achieve their potential in education and life.

Our young people are entitled to nothing less.



Estelle Morris, Secretary of State
for Education and Skills

Chapter 1

The vision for the 14–19 phase

Summary: We set out an evolving vision for greater coherence in the 14–19 phase of education and training in England and the challenges and opportunities it presents to all those with a stake in the changes we propose.

1.1 Half a century ago, at the time of the 1944 Education Act, it was clear that the nation needed to develop better vocational and technical education to meet the needs of a rapidly changing post-war society. It did not happen. During the last sixty years, the pace of social and economic change has increased dramatically and successive attempts have been made to improve vocational education and raise its standing in society. In practice most of these changes were piecemeal and enjoyed limited or no more than short-term success, while a long tradition of apprenticeship training was allowed to go into decline. There is no economic basis for undervaluing vocational education and qualifications. Yet this is precisely England's post-war legacy. We need now to rectify the traditional neglect of vocational education as a route to success and encourage far more young people to stay on in learning after age 16. We must also continue to break down the divide between education and training and emphasise that all pathways contribute to employability and responsible citizenship.

1.2 More people need to be better educated than ever before if we are to be a successful high-skills economy. The decline in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs is irreversible. To make a significant impact on national competitiveness and productivity we need to focus on the full range of abilities and skills. All, not just some, young people need to continue their education and training beyond the compulsory years. There will be rapid changes in the knowledge and skills required for particular jobs, so everybody needs to be motivated to engage in lifelong learning. At least half our young adults should at some stage enter higher education if our economy is to have enough people with higher-level skills.

1.3 In these circumstances we have to design a truly coherent education system that runs from the early years to adulthood. Sixteen has been a traditional break point in education. We need to transform it from a point at which young people divide into those who stay on and those who leave into a point where every young person is committed to continuing to learn.

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1.4 Our aim is that the 14–19 phase of education and training in England should:

- raise the levels of achievement of all young people in both general and vocational qualifications and increase participation in post-16 education and training, including higher education;
- meet the needs and aspirations of all young people, so that they are motivated to make a commitment to lifelong learning and to become socially responsible citizens and workers;
- broaden the skills acquired by all young people to improve their employability, bridge the skills gap identified by employers, and overcome social exclusion;
- be delivered through flexible, integrated and innovative networks of collaborative providers committed to achieving ambitious new goals for all young people in the 14–19 phase of their lives and their education.

This is ambitious but essential to our overall mission of building a modern Britain based on economic success and social justice.

1.5 It is not only a matter of raising levels of achievement and skill, though the need to raise performance is pressing. It is also about the development of the whole person and making sure our young people are prepared for a world that is very different from the one in which their parents grew up. The present generation of young people needs the skills to enable them to be confident of long-term employability and to respond flexibly to the unknown challenges ahead. And they must be prepared for an adult life in which they are involved as active, responsible citizens in their communities and in which they can contribute to the country's economic and social well-being.

THE CHALLENGE

1.6 Only three out of four 16–18 year olds in England were in education and training at the end of 2000 and, although this figure has been rising, it is of serious concern that it remains well below European and OECD averages. This situation can no longer be tolerated.

1.7 A recent report[1] found that, overall, the proportions of the workforce holding Level 2[2] and Level 3[3] qualifications in the UK are below those in France and Germany. Although the gap between the UK and the best of the rest of the world is narrowing in terms of the achievement of Level 2 qualifications, the majority of these gains are made by rising attainment at GCSE.

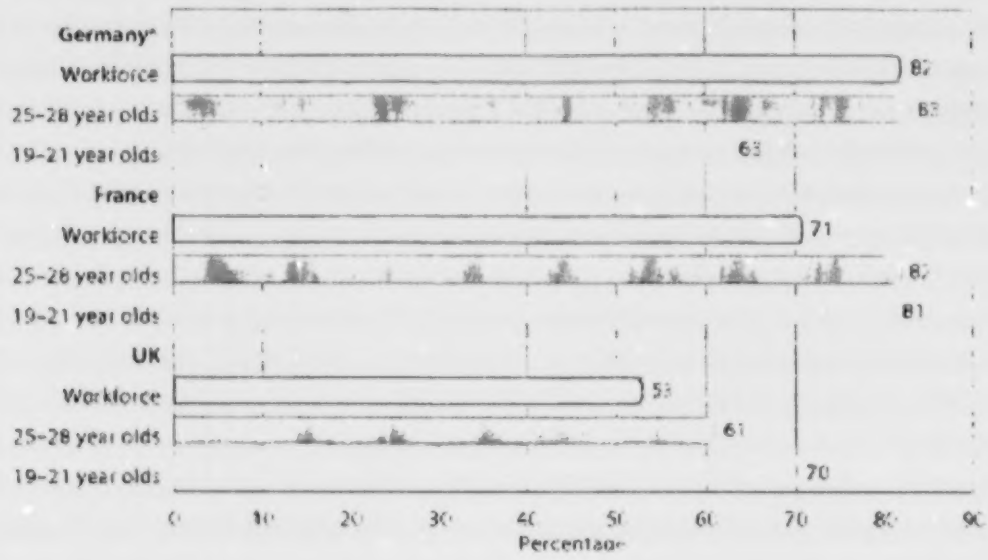
1.8 The impact of a skills shortage was demonstrated in a series of studies[4] that compared UK firms with similar firms in

[1] Campbell et al, *Skills in England 2001: research report:* Department for Education and Skills

[2] 5 or more GCSEs at A*–C, an intermediate GNVQ, NVQ Level 2 or other equivalent qualification

[3] 2 or more GCE A Levels, an advanced GNVQ, NVQ Level 3 or other equivalent qualification

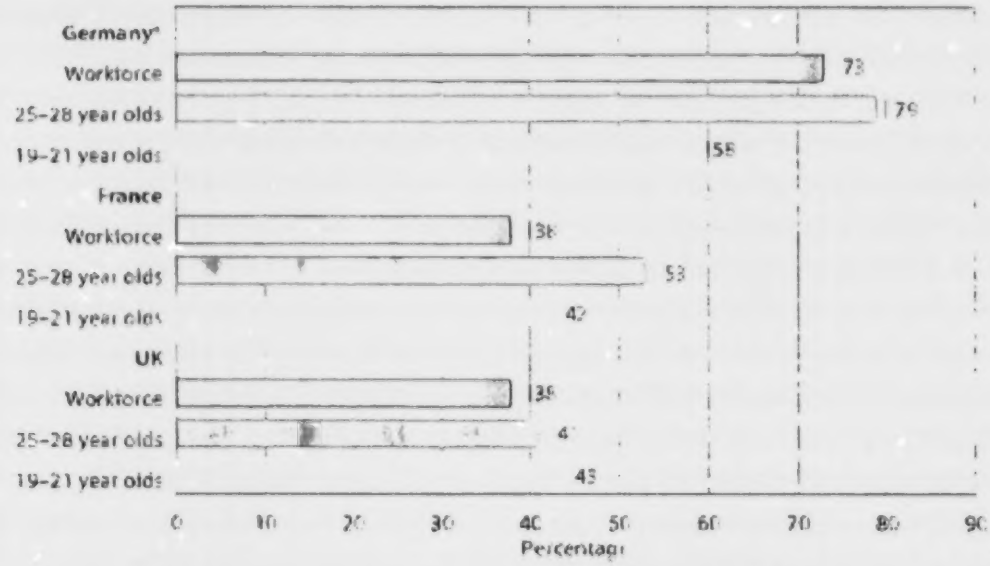
Qualifications at NVQ Level 2+ or equivalent in UK, France and Germany, 1998



Source: Steedman in DTI 2001 as quoted in Campbell et al, *Skills in England 2001: research report*: Department for Education and Skills

*Germany data is 1997

Qualifications at NVQ Level 3+ or equivalent in UK, France and Germany, 1998



Source: Steedman in DTI 2001 as quoted in Campbell et al, *Skills in England 2001: research report*: Department for Education and Skills

*Germany data is 1997

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competitor countries. A clear connection was found between higher skills and higher productivity. UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head, although close to EU and OECD averages, is 21% below the G7 average.[5] Productivity is a key determinant of GDP per head and needs to improve if our economic performance is to improve. We want to close the productivity gap with international economies. This requires fundamental improvement to our skills base. We must therefore increase retention and achievement post-16.

1.9 Across the OECD successful completion of post-16 education and training programmes is becoming the norm. What is common to other OECD countries is the esteem in which both vocational and general studies are held and the ability of students to progress to higher education from either of them. The lack of high-quality vocational pathways in the UK explains in part why far too many young people do not reach or move beyond Level 2, or fall out of education and training before they are 19. The case for improving skills, and especially intermediate and technical skills, is irrefutable, as many employers have insisted and the Skills Task Force[6] has demonstrated.

1.10 The recent report from the OECD[7] on the study of how well schools had equipped young people with the skills for adult life showed the UK performance to be world-class. But the study also showed that there was too big a gap between high and low attainers in the UK and that socio-economic background remained a barrier to educational success. This has to be overcome in our national interest: social justice and economic success mean we must do all we can to remove the notorious long tail of under-performance that mars our record in education.

1.11 At present, less than 20% of young people under 21 from the lower socio-economic groups go to university compared with over 70% from the highest[8]. The key factor that determines whether or not young people enter higher education is their achievement at age 18/19. If they have achieved Level 3 then in the vast majority of cases they will progress to higher education. That is the importance and challenge of 14–19 education and training. One of our major targets is to increase and broaden participation in higher education so that by the end of the decade 50% of those aged between 18 and 30 will participate, with access widened for those whose families have no previous experience of higher education. Getting the proper representation of students from low-income families in higher education

[4] Prais, S. (1995), *Productivity, Education and Training: An International Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

[5] OECD data quoted in a 2001 DTI Report: *UK Competitiveness Indicators*: second edition. G7 countries are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and US

[6] DfEE (2000), *Skills for All: Research Report from the National Skills Task Force*

[7] *Knowledge and Skills for Life* – First Results from PISA 2000

[8] GB Age Participation Index

depends heavily on transforming their experience of the 14–19 phase in school, college or workplace.

1.12 There is another, equally important, 50%: those who do not enter higher education. Their needs are very varied and sometimes highly specialised and so will be met only through a diverse but co-ordinated system of education and training. Designing the system, so that it will attract and retain these young people in worthwhile education and training between 16 and 19, is as great a challenge as expanding higher education. But it is a challenge we have started to meet. Further foundations are laid in this Green Paper.

1.13 Today young people aged between 14 and 19 may be more independent and autonomous than were their parents and grandparents. They also demand more from their education and training and are quicker to reject what they do not like and what does not meet their immediate needs. At the same time, they can find the world and their lives more complex and more confusing. Between 14 and 19 young people are striving to develop their personal and social identities: they are assertive yet lacking self-confidence and vulnerable in their inexperience. They need and deserve better education and training. They also need support and guidance to help them to take best advantage of the opportunities available.

1.14 Making 14–19 education and training into a coherent phase means that all learners should have appropriate and challenging programmes that will help them achieve their ambitions. Coherence also means that learners should be offered choice and progression in learning, with continuity and stability. The existing 14–16 curriculum and the different content and structure in the post-16 curriculum, the institutional break that occurs at some point for most students and the relative weakness of vocational pathways mean that it will take time and effort to create such coherence for all.

1.15 The proposals in this document to improve the coherence of the 14–19 phase build on existing measures – such as Education Maintenance Allowances, the Curriculum 2000 reforms and improved Modern Apprenticeships – which aim to increase participation in, and broaden, post-16 education and training. We have undertaken to evaluate the effect of these reforms when sufficient information is available, in order to ensure that students' participation and experiences in post-16 education and training prepare them well for their future careers.

1.16 We need some changes: we have to decide what needs to be done and how to do it and then put it into practice over a carefully planned period of change.

THE OPPORTUNITIES

1.17 Over the past five years significant progress has been made to raise standards in the primary years. The success of the primary literacy and numeracy strategies and the Key Stage 3 strategy (see paragraph 2.3) will ensure that young people reach the age of 14 with a sound

grasp of the basics and a good general education. We must build on these strong foundations to transform our post-14 education and training.

1.18 The outline proposals for a coherent 14–19 phase in England were included in the White Paper ***Schools*** *achieving success*. These were strongly endorsed: three out of every four respondents supported or strongly supported the proposal to introduce new pathways for all from age 14.

1.19 Our proposals also respond to what young people themselves are saying. The evidence on their views[5] about what they would like to see suggests that:

- there is significant interest in vocational options, but, since they are aware that vocational courses are often held in lower esteem than general ones, they are not attracted to them;
- work experience is valuable and enjoyable, but for some it is a missed or inadequate opportunity because it is irrelevant or unchallenging to the individual young person;
- a flexible curriculum can help to combat the disaffection and boredom currently felt by some pupils, by giving them more choice and providing a better match between learning programmes and individual aspirations;
- young people need more support to make their choices, with family and friends having the strongest influence;
- qualifications are seen as important for progression.

1.20 The best education is far more than the acquisition of knowledge, skills and qualifications. It also helps young people to develop attitudes and values that provide the basis for a successful and rewarding life in the home, at work and in the community. Young people in this new century should have self-confidence, the ability to be self-critical, the drive to take on new challenges and take risks and the capacity to relate to others in positive, constructive ways. Today's generation of young people needs these skills.

1.21 In short, all those with a stake in the 14–19 phase, and not least the young people themselves, believe the time is right for us to take further action to address the coherence of 14–19 education and training.

OUR PROPOSALS

1.22 If young people are to continue in learning after the age of 16, they must be able to follow courses that meet their aspirations and match their abilities. It is not a matter of fitting students into a rigid and inflexible educational system, but of offering greater choice within education and training in the 14–19 phase. It means devising equally-valued pathways, both

[5] Source: Youth Cohort Study; several research studies

general and vocational, which allow young people to switch pathways in the light of their emerging needs and aspirations. We will increase the level of investment in future years to sustain further development, as resources permit. Announcements about future funding will be made in the summer.

1.23 The objectives of our proposed reforms are:

- the curriculum needs to become more flexible and responsive to students' individual needs. It must motivate them so they stay in learning and it must challenge the most able. For some this entails providing more and better vocational opportunities. For others it means beginning advanced level study early, either alongside GCSE programmes or by skipping GCSEs in some subjects. For yet another group it may mean taking more time to reach a higher level of attainment. All pathways should potentially lead to an overarching award at age 18/19 that recognises and records young people's achievements;

- we need to build a world-class system of education which delivers the technical and vocational skills of an advanced economy so that every young person has a pathway to success. It will be a one-tier system with many different pathways which all provide progression. Technical and vocational education should become a positive and fulfilling choice, not a second-class fallback for the less able or disaffected. Collaborative working between schools and colleges, supported by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), local education authorities (LEAs) and employers, is beginning to break down the barrier between general and vocational education. We need to ensure that vocational options and programmes are coherent, so that they equip young people both with broad knowledge and skills and with the specialist expertise and competences needed for the workplace. They must also be as rigorous as the traditional academic pathway. We need stronger involvement of employers, including small and medium-sized enterprises, in supporting the curriculum and in offering more opportunities for effective learning in the workplace, so that young people can see how they are gaining skills relevant to their future careers;

- if young people are to make choices they need good, reliable information and strong pastoral support, from their schools and colleges as well as their parents and carers. Impartial advice and guidance will be vital;

- the 14–19 phase must become more responsive to those with special educational needs; to those from a range of ethnic backgrounds; to those from low-income families; and to those in danger of social exclusion. While the majority of young people will not need special arrangements, some may be necessary if all young people are to have access to the new opportunities we intend to create. Increased flexibility

in the curriculum, offering broader and more tailored opportunities for learning, should help schools and colleges to encourage and support young people in regaining their enthusiasm for learning and for staying on in education or training. It also gives a chance to remotivate young people who may have become disaffected with school and consequently display challenging behaviour which can disrupt both their and others' learning;

- much closer collaboration and innovative working between schools, colleges and training providers will be essential. This can build on the best of what is already being developed. In those circumstances some students may have to attend more than one institution at some point in their programmes. Every student in this phase needs the security of an educational base; the home institution, whether school or college, should be responsible for securing the welfare of the students on its roll and for ensuring continuity and progression for all. Teachers in 11–16 schools will need to help students plan for the whole 14–19 phase, not just the initial part that ends at 16. Over time, the focus on achievement at 16 will shift to age 19;

- flexible access and delivery through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and e-learning will be needed. This applies especially to dispersed groups of learners, such as those in rural areas and those choosing minority options. Curriculum Online will support these choices by making access to a wide range of digital resources easier and offering a coherent, consistent and comprehensive service, regardless of location.

GETTING THERE

1.24 Our detailed proposals are in the following chapters. They apply to England only. We have talked to individual teachers, headteachers, college principals and other providers, employers, young people and others with a stake in 14–19 learning, as well as to organisations representing 14–19 providers, higher education and business. We have found wide-ranging support for the objectives and broad thrust of our 14–19 proposals. Many of those we have talked to have offered examples of existing effective practice and made valuable suggestions about how 14–19 learning can be improved. We have sought to reflect these in our proposals. We have taken especial note of those who have emphasised that changes must be carefully paced and tested.

1.25 Much is already happening in different parts of the country to develop the 14–19 phase, including the use of online and distance learning. Some of this is reflected in the case studies included in this document. Bodies such as the Learning and Skills Development Agency, the National Association of Head Teachers and the Secondary Heads Association have prepared policy papers. The Association of Colleges has been active in this area; and a number of LEAs are moving to develop the 14–19 phase. This Green Paper offers an

opportunity to share ideas and to identify best practice in line with our aims. Along the way, the proposals can be refined and turned into action plans. There are radical implications for relationships between institutions.

1.26 Both schools and colleges are central to our vision of delivering a coherent 14–19 phase. Many are now collaborating with each other, for example to provide vocational opportunities at Key Stage 4 or through joint curriculum planning to extend the range of choices available to young people. Our proposals build on the work already under way in schools and colleges across the country and will encourage the spread of best practice.

1.27 The consultation on this Green Paper must involve its participants in debate and dialogue and we shall provide sufficient time for this to take place. We will involve young people in the consultation.

1.28 We will try out different models as the basis for planning further developments and providing guidance on best practice. Changes must be tested and proved to be robust before they are introduced more widely. The pace of change must be matched to the capacity of those involved to be confident that every change is an improvement. Our proposals will encourage institutions to innovate, but we also recognise that they will want to move at different rates to develop the 14–19 phase. We shall plan carefully to avoid overload on those who will implement the changes and to make sure that each development dovetails with previous improvements. An illustrative timetable is suggested in Appendix 1.

THE OUTCOMES OF THE 14–19 PHASE

1.29 Our ambitious aim, which we are continuing to pursue through the development of a coherent 14–19 phase in England, will be to achieve:

- higher levels of participation and higher standards of attainment for all young people by age 19;
- a commitment by all young people to lifelong learning;
- increased employability for all young people, whether before or after higher education;
- more rounded students with a broader education, who will be more motivated and more responsible citizens and workers, able to contribute to a productive economy;
- a reduction in the numbers of those who truant from school and drop out of education and training after the age of 16, because we cannot afford to waste the lives of any of the nation's young people;
- a greatly improved 14–19 system of education and training which is of world-class standard and of which we can be proud.

Q: Do you share our vision of the 14–19 phase?

Chapter 2

14–19: marking the start of the phase

Summary: The 14–19 phase of learning should be marked by a clear beginning, middle and end. The phase should start with a review of achievement towards the end of Key Stage 3. This will provisionally identify longer-term career and learning goals, including the achievement of the Matriculation Diploma by age 19. It will inform the choice of options for 14–16 while not ruling out a subsequent change of goals. The outcome of the review might be recorded in an individual learning plan to form the basis for monitoring and review throughout the 14–19 phase. GCSEs and equivalent qualifications should become a progress check around the midpoint of the phase. We ask for views on the best way of helping schools to prepare young people for entry to the 14–19 phase.

2.1 Our proposals for a new 14–19 phase start from the notion that it should be marked by a clear beginning, middle and end:

- the 14–19 phase should begin with a review of progress between the pupil, his or her parents or carers and teachers in the school. In the case of young people at risk of disengaging from learning or those who are underachieving, the Connexions Service will be involved where it can add value to the work of schools. This review should identify longer-term goals and aspirations on a provisional basis. It would inform the selection of options for study and wider activities in the initial period after age 14. The start of the new phase might be marked by the preparation of a plan setting out goals and how they will be pursued;
- the core of the phase contains the learning leading to qualifications; other learning undertaken for personal development, for example in citizenship; and wider activities, often outside the school or college environment;
- the end of the phase would be marked by a new overarching award – the Matriculation Diploma – which would recognise young people's achievements.

2.2 GCSEs and equivalent qualifications will continue to have an important role but will over time evolve into a progress check around the midpoint of the 14–19 phase. We make proposals later for greater flexibility over the timing of GCSEs and for other qualifications to be recognised as suitable for some 16 year olds.

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MOVING ON FROM KEY STAGE 3

2.3 We acknowledged in the White Paper ***Schools** achieving success* that there had been growing concern about the slow progress children make between the ages of 11 and 14 and we set out our agenda for raising standards for this age group – the Key Stage 3 strategy. As it achieves its goals the vast majority of young people will, by the age of 14, have:

- reached a good standard (level 5 or above in the National Curriculum) in the basics of English, mathematics, science and ICT;
- benefited from a broad curriculum, including studying each of the National Curriculum subjects; and
- learned how to reason, think logically and creatively, and take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

The strategy is intended to stretch all pupils. Catch-up materials and classes will help pupils who are falling behind. Special programmes are available for children with special educational needs and to help schools meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Young people who have fallen behind their peers by age 14 will need particular support to make the transition to the 14–19 phase. The strategy will provide a firm platform of achievement from which to launch significant improvements to the experiences of young people after the age of 14.

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES AT AGE 14

2.4 Support for young people towards the end of Key Stage 3 will be crucial in raising their aspirations and in providing advice and guidance on the choice of pathways. The wider range of options from age 14 and the focus on outcomes at 19 rather than 16 mean that choices made towards the end of Key Stage 3 will assume a greater significance. However, choices made then should not constrain young people to particular pathways if later it becomes clear that it is in their best interests to change. Chapter 6 offers a discussion of the range of support that young people will need before and during the 14–19 phase.

2.5 Much effective practice exists to help young people plan their learning. The end of Key Stage 3 is already a significant point, when schools have arrangements in place to help young people consider their learning goals and make their choices wisely. For young people aged 13 and over, Progress File[10] has been developed to help them plan and review their learning transitions. Progress File materials are currently used by about a third of secondary schools and we intend to make them more widely available later this year to all providers of 13–19 education who want to make use of them. The materials will be revised as necessary in the light of evaluation.

2.6 We want to help schools build on existing good practice in preparing and motivating young people for entry to the

[10] Progress File is a set of guidance and working materials to help young people from age 13 and adults to record, review and present their achievements, set goals, and make progression in learning and in work.

14–19 phase and helping them to manage their subsequent learning with an eye to their eventual careers. This will include guidance on good practice in careers education and guidance throughout Key Stage 3 (see chapter 6). The aim is to:

- mark the end of Key Stage 3 and entry into the 14–19 phase;
- raise young people's aspirations towards staying on in learning post-16, the Matriculation Diploma, higher education and their eventual careers;
- ensure that young people are equipped with the skills to plan, manage and review their learning and to set personal targets; and
- help them to choose the most suitable options from age 14, and to identify the learning and other development they need to gain the Matriculation Diploma at age 19.

2.7 We do not propose a single model for achieving these aims. For the purpose of this Paper, we are using the term 'individual learning plan'. We should welcome suggestions on how this should be developed. For pupils with special educational needs, we suggest that transition plans[11] should stand in the place of individual learning plans. Teachers will of course continue to play an important role in providing advice and guidance to their students, who will also have access to external, impartial careers advice. Models may need to be developed in different ways in different places. The work already done in connection with Progress File provides a possible basis for development. We should like to know what sort of support will be helpful to schools in achieving the aims listed above, in particular from the Connexions Service as this is rolled out. We could also offer guidance on how different models might be developed and prepare a toolkit for use by schools, but invite views on whether schools would welcome these.

2.8 We want to encourage more students, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds, to aim for higher education. Choices at 14 will offer a chance to encourage them to raise their aspirations, help them to appreciate the benefits of higher education, and give them the opportunity to visit higher education institutions. The Excellence Challenge, which aims to increase the number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who apply for and enter higher education, is providing support in some areas.

Q: Do you agree that the aims set out in paragraph 2.6 are the right ones to mark the start of the phase?

[11] Transition plans must be drawn up for young people with statements of special educational needs following the Year 9 review of those statements in order to plan for the young person's transition to adult life. Connexions advisers will be available to help with transition planning for all young people with special educational needs but without statements.

Q: Do you support the proposal that pupils should draw up an individual learning plan towards the end of Key Stage 3 to plot how they would achieve their planned goals by age 19?

Q: What support should be available to prepare young people for entry to the 14–19 phase:

- *from the school?*
- *from the Connexions Service?*

Q: Would you welcome guidance on how different models of marking the start of the 14–19 phase might be developed?

Q: Would it be helpful for schools to have access to a toolkit based on the approaches, materials and processes developed for Progress File?

Q: Are there any further measures that might be taken to encourage young people from groups under-represented in higher education to aim for entry to higher education?

Chapter 3

the content of the 14–19 curriculum

Summary: We reaffirm our belief that up to age 19 all young people should be entitled to experience breadth and balance in their learning. We acknowledge, however, that the current structure of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 can be a barrier to student motivation and the flexibility of individual programmes.

We propose a new structure for the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4. We believe there should be a core of compulsory subjects that are essential for progression and development beyond the end of compulsory schooling. All pupils should study mathematics, English, science and ICT, alongside citizenship, religious education, careers education, sex education, physical education (PE) and work-related learning.

We propose a new statutory entitlement of access to a subject within each of modern foreign languages, design and technology, the arts and the humanities.

We intend to develop more vocational qualifications and new hybrid qualifications that combine traditional general subjects with their vocational applications. We will ensure that new qualifications are robust and high-quality. We intend to call all GCSEs and A levels by a subject title, without any vocational label. We propose to enable the most able students to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding at advanced level through introducing more demanding questions into A2 papers, leading to a new distinction grade for the higher achievers. The new generation of Modern Apprenticeships will form an important part of a 14–19 vocational pathway.

We propose that all 16–19 year olds should be entitled to continue studying literacy, numeracy and ICT until they have reached at least Level 2.

3.1 The purpose of the National Curriculum is to ensure that all young people during the period of compulsory education follow a broad and balanced programme. This is a principle to which we remain committed as we strive for ever higher standards of attainment. However, the current construction of Key Stage 4 positions it as the final stage of compulsory education, ending in GCSEs. We believe it needs to be seen as the beginning of a more coherent phase through to age 19, leading to employment or higher education and setting the scene for continued lifelong learning.

KEY STAGE 4: THE 14–16 AGE GROUP – THE CURRENT POSITION

3.2 After a review in 1999, revisions to the National Curriculum were introduced in 2000. At Key Stage 4 the core and foundation subjects currently comprise English, mathematics, science, design and technology, modern foreign languages, ICT, and PE. Citizenship will be added from 2002. Religious education, sex education and careers education are also compulsory.

3.3 For each National Curriculum subject at Key Stage 4, programmes of study specify what is to be taught to pupils of different abilities and maturity. Pupils are then entered for qualifications; for the vast majority of pupils these are GCSEs. The GCSE serves a range of important purposes and functions:

- it provides a clear and worthwhile goal for students at the end of Key Stage 4;
- it provides a progress check in subjects and helps young people choose what they want to study after age 16;
- it is a record of what has been achieved in subjects that will not be pursued further;
- it is a common requirement for entry to FE and Modern Apprenticeships;
- it is an important accountability measure for the outcomes of 11–16 schools; and
- it is a known qualification that provides a benchmark for other qualifications at Levels 1[12] and 2.

3.4 However, we expect the GCSE to evolve over time (see paragraph 3.30 and chapter 5). Teaching and learning in Key Stage 4 tend to be driven by the GCSE requirements. The statutory requirements typically absorb about 80% of curriculum time. There is general agreement that these requirements are insufficiently flexible to accommodate individual choice, particularly for those who may wish to pursue predominantly vocational options or those who wish to progress more quickly. In Key Stage 4 the current National Curriculum is sometimes seen as a barrier rather than as a valued entitlement for all. Evidence of this is seen in the extent of disapplication.

3.5 Schools can disapply, for any one pupil, up to two National Curriculum subjects in order to:

- provide wider opportunities for work-related learning;
- allow pupils making significantly less progress than their peers to consolidate other learning;
- allow pupils with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area.

3.6 The monitoring of disapplication in 2000/01 by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) suggests that

[12] 5 GCSEs at at least grades D-G; NVQ Level 1 or equivalent

around a third of schools were using the regulations in respect of 5% of pupils nationally. Figures for 2001/02 are expected to be considerably higher. Such figures may in any case understate the use of disapplication.

3.7 The disapplication arrangements are not satisfactory. They are complicated and poorly understood by schools and parents. The language of disapplication is negative, and, despite their intention, the arrangements are widely perceived as remedial, and so undermine attempts to establish vocational provision as a high-quality option for a wide spectrum of pupils. Schools most commonly use disapplication to provide for an extended period of work-related learning, followed by consolidating learning across the curriculum. In terms of the pupils affected, the largest number benefit from the arrangement allowing schools to emphasise a particular curriculum area. The subject most frequently disapplied is modern foreign languages, followed by design and technology, with science being disapplied in a very small number of cases.

A NEW, FLEXIBLE 14–16 CURRICULUM

3.8 The route to higher standards means building on the success of the Key Stage 3 strategy and providing greater flexibility in Key Stage 4. As we said in the White Paper ***Schools*** *achieving success*, in order to increase choice for young people from the age of 14, it is necessary to create greater space in Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum. Our proposals are designed to ensure rising standards of attainment among young people who are better prepared to contribute to a fair society and a productive economy. We aim to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility to allow students to pursue their talents and aspirations while maintaining a strong focus on the basics. We do not propose to change the statutory minimum school leaving age. We will use the framework of the National Curriculum to ensure that essential learning is protected until age 16. A core of subjects will therefore remain compulsory. However, we now propose a radical way forward and we want to hear the views of others on where the balance should lie.

3.9 The new 14–16 requirements should have a clear and transparent rationale. Subjects should be mandatory at this stage only if they meet one of two overlapping criteria:

- they provide an essential basis for progression, across all areas of learning and for keeping young people's options open; or

- they are essential for personal development, contributing to young people's spiritual, cultural, social and moral development as they begin to take their place in society and in the world of work.

3.10 Within this rationale, mathematics, English, science and ICT meet the first criterion of being essential for progression. These subjects would remain as statutory requirements. In mathematics and English there would be an expectation that the

breadth and depth of content should be no less than at present. For many pupils this would also be the case for science. Most pupils would continue to sit GCSEs in mathematics, English and science (a single or double award in balanced science). We would expect pupils to continue to use ICT in many subjects and to take a qualification in it.

3.11 We considered the position of science very carefully. It is at present one of the subjects which may be disapplied at Key Stage 4 to allow wider opportunities for work-related learning; in 2000/01 this was the case for some 2000 pupils. On the other hand science is a core subject in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, along with mathematics and English; it is important for our economy; and careers in many areas increasingly need an underpinning of science. Over 80% of pupils now follow a course leading to a double award GCSE which provides a secure base for progression to more advanced study in a range of science subjects. In the light of those considerations we have retained science in the core of compulsory subjects. Our proposals should permit sufficient flexibility in the Key Stage 4 curriculum to enable the relatively small number of pupils for whom science is currently disapplied still to undertake work-related learning. We recognise the need to ensure that science GCSEs provide a range of choices relevant to all abilities and aptitudes. The double award will remain the preferred option for many. An additional GCSE in applied science, one of the eight new GCSEs in vocational subjects, will be introduced in September 2002. QCA is to pilot from 2003 an innovative and flexible structure for GCSE science. This will engage pupils with contemporary scientific issues and focus on their role as users and consumers of science. The National Curriculum programme of study for science will be reviewed and updated, to achieve a core of science relevant to all learners. This smaller programme of study could be built into a wider range of qualifications.

3.12 Citizenship is to become statutory within the National Curriculum from September 2002. Religious education, careers education, sex education, and PE are all within the National Curriculum or otherwise required. All are essential for personal development. We are committed to 2 hours of high-quality PE and sport each week provided in and out of school for all up to age 16. We propose that in PE there should be an emphasis on physical fitness, health and well-being during the 14–19 stage. An effective programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) often provides the framework for some of these areas, and is particularly important in equipping young people, especially the more vulnerable ones, to maintain their engagement in learning.

3.13 In addition we think it is essential for progression and for personal development that all young people should undertake some work-related learning. Such learning should be designed to develop pupils' employability and to help prepare them for working life. It involves gaining experience of work, working practices and environments, developing skills for

working life and learning through activities and challenges set in work-related contexts. We should also like young people to have opportunities to develop their enterprise capability, enabling them to handle uncertainty, and make reasonable risk/reward assessments and act upon them. Research is under way into effective ways of doing this.

3.14 Work-related learning can be delivered in a variety of ways. These include not only direct experience through work and community placements and, indeed, part-time jobs, but also learning about the world of work through vocational courses and enterprise activity in schools. For some students, work-related learning will be built into their subject learning, citizenship and PSHE, supplemented by careers education and work experience. For others it will be provided largely through a course leading to a vocational qualification for which there will now be space in the curriculum. Some students will follow an extended work-related learning programme with an FE college, training provider or employer.

3.15 The learning essential for personal development (listed in the paragraphs above) will provide a sound basis for young people's participation and progress in a range of wider activities that young people will pursue throughout the 14–19 phase. These could be recognised in the new Matriculation Diploma we propose in chapter 4. But we make no presumption that learning and experience in these areas should lead to formal examinations or qualifications. Much of the content of the subjects – particularly citizenship, careers education and work-related learning – can be taught across a number of subject areas and we would not expect them to take up more curriculum time than they do now.

3.16 Currently all pupils must study modern foreign languages and design and technology at Key Stage 4, unless their schools have used the disapplication procedures. We believe this is too constraining. For some students it is demotivating in the short term and has consequences for their eventual achievement of qualifications. At the same time we are determined to preserve access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all. We therefore intend to introduce a new statutory entitlement to access that would require schools to make these subject areas available to any pupil wishing to study them. We also propose that there should be the same entitlement to a subject in the humanities and a subject in the arts. Pupils would not be statutorily obliged to study these subjects, but schools would be obliged to make them available.

3.17 We would expect all schools to make modern foreign languages, design and technology, the arts and the humanities available, but how schools provide such entitlement to access in these subjects is a matter for local decision. They can, for example, provide access in collaboration with others, and Curriculum Online will provide resources to support teachers and learning. Although the majority of schools will no doubt continue to prepare students for GCSE, others will look to alternative qualifications.

16–19 collaboration

Beaumont, Sandringham and Verulam Schools with Oaklands FE College, St Albans

These collaborative arrangements provide post-16 students with a wide range of subjects to choose from: vocational qualifications in art and design, health and social care, recreation and leisure and business are available at advanced and intermediate levels.

They also ensure that minority subjects including German, music, music technology, government and politics, further mathematics, Spanish, food technology and physical education are available to all and that students' aspirations can be met. Currently almost half the students take at least one subject in another institution. Achievement and retention rates are high and are consistently above the national average.

Students value the opportunities which the collaborative arrangements offer and are clear about the benefits. As one said:

"By going to another school in our consortium I was able to fit in all four of the subjects that I wanted without any timetable clashes. It gave me the chance to experience a different learning environment. The teaching is different and works well for me. I have also enjoyed mixing with new people, staff and students, and so the arrangements have social as well as academic benefits."

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3.18 Design and technology develops a range of creative, practical and applied skills that contribute to adult and working life. From its craft base it has moved forward significantly in recent years, enabling pupils to experience modern industrial practice at first hand. Over £1 million has been invested in training teachers in CAD/CAM , following its introduction in the 2000 revised National Curriculum. Teacher and curriculum development projects in, for example, textiles software, primary food technology, 'future' design and electronics, will, over time, provide more opportunities for teachers to update their skills. Science and Engineering Ambassadors from industry will offer their own expertise to teachers in support of the curriculum and out of school activities.

3.19 Design and technology is studied by all pupils from the age of 5 and has a range of sub-disciplines at Key Stage 4 leading to a variety of GCSEs, but for many pupils it is not seen as central to their programmes. Disapplication provisions are used for more than 23,000 pupils. We recognise that in around 20% of schools the quality of resources and accommodation are issues affecting the teaching of design and technology, and we will be looking to see how schools and LEAs can be encouraged to address these needs as a priority. We also recognise that new technologies have made considerable demands on design and technology teachers, and we encourage schools to enable them to update their skills. As increased numbers of pupils opt for more substantial work-related learning programmes from the age of 14, we want to see the creative and practical skills fostered by design and technology playing a key role. But we do not think that design and technology should be required study for all pupils.

3.20 The teaching of modern foreign languages needs to reflect the reality of the world in which we live. Our position at the heart of Europe places a particular emphasis on a number of European languages, but our global and cultural links extend much wider. Over 300 languages are in use in London alone, making it one of the most linguistically diverse cities in the world. The ability to understand and communicate in other languages contributes to community cohesion and educational inclusion, two of our key goals. We have not in the past taught languages as successfully as many other countries. A Level entries in both French and German have declined steadily since 1991/92.

3.21 We need to ensure that children, young people and adults all have opportunities to study languages and are motivated to do so. It is widely agreed that primary-aged children should have greater opportunities than at present to learn languages. The scale of disapplication from modern foreign languages at Key Stage 4 (36,000 pupils) shows that, for some young people aged 14–16, language learning presents serious problems; such young people will be able to take advantage of the additional flexibility we now propose for Key Stage 4 to choose from a wider range of options. But it is essential that more children should start language learning earlier than Year 7 and we also

need to find ways of enabling and encouraging adults to start or re-start learning a language if we are to participate successfully in the global economy.

3.22 We want to develop a new approach to the teaching of modern foreign languages. We are publishing alongside this Green Paper our outline plans for improving opportunities for young people, especially primary-aged children, to learn languages, both in and out of school. This will lead to our producing a national languages strategy in the autumn. Our long-term goal, subject to resources, is that every primary-aged pupil should have the opportunity to learn a foreign language. The Key Stage 3 strategy, with its dedicated strand of work on improving standards in modern foreign languages, will support the drive to motivate young people to continue to acquire language skills. At Key Stage 4, all young people will be entitled to be taught modern foreign languages. The move to an entitlement will reflect the reality of large-scale disapplication in schools and should help us to focus on languages at Key Stage 3 and, in the longer term, at Key Stage 2. Creating more space at Key Stage 4 will also make it easier for those who so wish to study more than one language.

3.23 This repositioning of these National Curriculum subjects is a radical proposal and is likely to attract arguments from those with firmly-held views about the imperative for particular subjects to be taught to all pupils in this age group. But it will not be possible to offer young people more customised, and to them more relevant, programmes from 14 in a more coherent 14–19 phase if we do not create sufficient space in the curriculum. The movement of some subjects from a requirement to an entitlement to access will make curriculum time available for those whose programmes need it, while ensuring that the subjects remain available for the majority who are likely to continue to want them. The increased flexibility in Key Stage 4 is a major contribution to our deregulation drive. It reflects our trust in the capacity of schools, working together and with FE providers, to offer a broad and balanced experience to young people aged 14–19. The current curriculum typically absorbs about 80% of pupils' school day but its minimum requirements could be delivered in 60%. We think that the compulsory elements within the revised curriculum we propose could be delivered in about 50% of pupils' time, so creating significant space for greatly increased choice by pupils and schools.

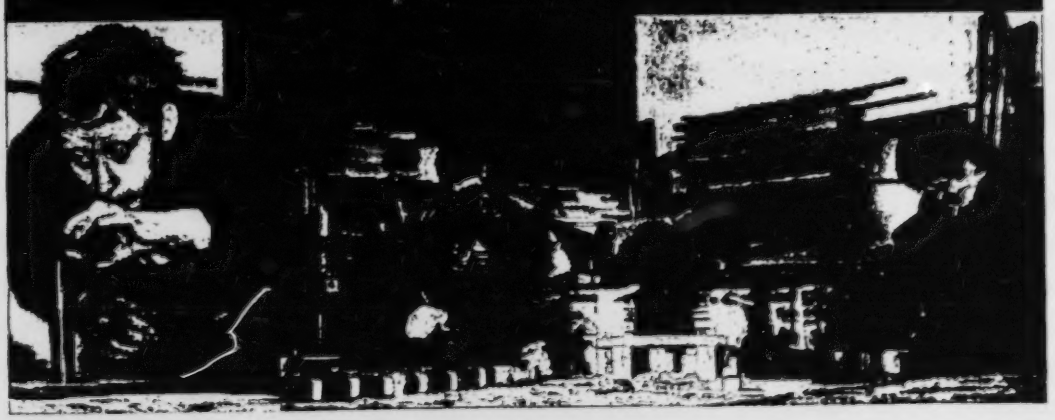
3.24 A direct consequence of redefining the curriculum as we propose is that the disapplication arrangements should become redundant and disappear. However, the necessary changes cannot be introduced to take effect until September 2004. Meanwhile we intend to amend and simplify the current disapplication arrangements. New guidance would make clear that disapplication need not be considered exceptional. Later we will align the disapplication regulations with the proposed statutory curriculum changes. This will mean that disapplication of science is no longer possible; we have referred to the implications of this in paragraph 3.11.

Collaboration between Leek College and Meadows Special School

The employment opportunities for young people with Moderate Learning Difficulties have greatly improved as a result of collaboration between Leek College and Meadows Special School.

The Honeycomb Project provides a unique opportunity for the students to develop employment skills. It offers them not only craft and vocationally based opportunities but also the chance for social and emotional development. The heart of the project is a furniture recycling and wood manufacturing business. Pupils experience a real work environment in which they are making a full contribution to the business.

College-based links support Meadows' pupils in extending their social and work based skills. This provision includes hair and beauty/self-presentation, art, use of the College multi-gym and a wide range of ICT activities. Pupils can gain ICT certification and accredited vocational qualifications. Subject specialists at the college and school staff teach the pupils as part of a team-teaching arrangement.



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3.25 We do not intend to change the existing arrangements for disapplication through statements of special educational need. However, the proposals for freeing up Key Stage 4 may result in a reduced need for wholesale disapplication of the provisions for those pupils with special educational needs for whom this is the case at present. ICT provides a valuable tool to enable effective access to the curriculum for many such pupils. Vocational options for young people with special educational needs must be of good quality, and not detract from the provision of a broad curriculum and the acquisition of any necessary basic skills.

3.26 The more we treat the 14–19 period as a single phase, the greater the scope for students to move at a pace best suited to their abilities and preferred ways of learning. Students and their advisers will be able to plan on the basis of a four-year rather than a two-year programme of learning. This will offer them both greater flexibility and greater coherence between the various elements of their individual programmes. Not everything they regard as important for their personal development needs to be completed before the age of 16. For example, students who begin to study a modern foreign language or design and technology before 16 need not complete the relevant qualification by 16, particularly if their 14–16 studies also include a large work-related element.

3.27 These changes to the curriculum and disapplication arrangements, and the development of planning and guidance support at the end of Key Stage 3, would together pave the way for the introduction of real choice for young people between distinct learning pathways from age 14. GCSEs and equivalent qualifications would continue to provide an important progress check at age 16, with choices from age 16 leading to further qualifications and achievements recognised at the age of 19 by the new Matriculation Diploma proposed in chapter 4.

DEVELOPING THE VOCATIONAL OPTIONS

3.28 Many young people will continue as now with predominantly general programmes. But increasingly we would expect others to extend the work-related element of their programme – beyond the minimum core we are suggesting for all – to pursue genuinely mixed programmes of study. The involvement of employers, including small and medium-sized enterprises, will be crucial. Too often in the past work-related learning has been seen as an inferior alternative to general study and appropriate only for less able pupils. High-quality and well-respected courses and qualifications should become attractive to the full spectrum of ability, including many young people who aspire to entry to higher education. For those who so wish, it will also be possible to pursue predominantly vocational programmes which provide a sound basis for progression to a Modern Apprenticeship at age 16 or to further vocational study after 16. Those with physical disabilities and sensory impairments must have access to vocational opportunities. In all cases

we want to be sure that programmes are sufficient to ensure a broad-based education and that choices made at 14 are not so narrow as to restrict the ability to change direction at age 16 or beyond.

3.29 The first new GCSEs in vocational subjects are to be available from September 2002 in some schools. We expect they will be far more widely available from September 2003. These new GCSEs will initially be available in Applied Art and Design; Applied Business; Engineering; Health and Social Care; Applied ICT; Leisure and Tourism; Manufacturing; and Applied Science. Each will be a double award, equivalent to two GCSEs. As these take hold, and subject to resources, we would like to extend the range of areas in which subjects are available to reflect the greater range of subjects offered at Vocational A Level. We would like the first of those additional titles to be available for teaching from September 2004. We also hope to meet the needs of a larger range of pupils by considering the case for some new GCSEs in vocational subjects equivalent in weight to existing single subject titles.

3.30 In the longer term parity of esteem between the general, mixed and vocational pathways could be enhanced through the redesign of existing GCSEs. New hybrid qualifications could be produced that, through the use of a common core and optional general or vocational units, allow single specifications for general, mixed or largely vocational options. Such qualifications would maximise students' access to a range of different progression routes and help to bridge the gap between the general and vocational options. The content of each qualification could be signalled through the qualification title so, for example, within the geography-related areas of study, the qualifications might be: general – *geography*; a mixed general and vocational – *geography: land and environment*; and a vocational option – *leisure and tourism*.

3.31 We also believe choice and parity of esteem would be better served by no longer attaching labels to signal that GCSEs are general or vocational, and instead simply naming them all GCSEs. At present the two types of GCSE sit in different parts of the national qualifications framework and have different criteria. We will ask the QCA to advise how and when we can move to a more simple approach which preserves the robustness and high standard of the qualifications, but in which both sorts can be referred to simply as GCSEs.

3.32 In January 2001 the then Secretary of State announced proposals for 14–16 year olds to study at a college or with a training provider for one or two days a week throughout Key Stage 4 and to work towards worthwhile qualifications. £38 million has been made available in 2002–04 to support the introduction of new GCSEs in vocational subjects in September 2002 and the creation of part-time vocational placements in colleges for 14–16 year olds. General FE colleges have been invited to form partnerships with schools, training providers and other

14–19 Collaboration
Tamar Valley Consortium

Tamar Valley Consortium is a partnership in the Plymouth area between schools, colleges, training providers and employers which enables 14–19 year olds to follow a wide range of accredited vocational courses.

All students follow NVQs or units towards them. Typically they spend two days a week with a training provider, two days at school or college and one day with an employer. There is a strong emphasis on Key Skills thoughout the delivery of students' programmes, and on students negotiating the components of their individual programmes.

The Consortium now offers vocational courses for 14–16 year olds, taking advantage of the greater flexibilities available at Key Stage 4. In 2001/02, there are 605 post-16 and 149 14–16 year olds registered with the Consortium. It offers 70 different courses.

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agents to put these initiatives into effect. Partnerships will benefit from a comprehensive programme of training and support from the Learning and Skills Development Agency. Local LSCs will have a key role to play in monitoring and evaluation and the allocation of funding.

3.33 This emphasis on greater variety for young people from age 14 will pose challenges for institutions and teachers. The reforms we propose are likely to entail a different approach to curriculum planning and timetabling as well as to wider issues such as monitoring attendance and behaviour management. Individual schools will still be able to make subjects outside the core compulsory at Key Stage 4, but we nonetheless expect schools to secure a wider range of options for their pupils than at present, and to include some vocational learning. This may entail collaboration with other institutions. We would expect OFSTED inspections to assess whether the available programmes and courses were meeting the needs of all pupils, while recognising the particular circumstances of some schools such as specialist schools. There will be pressure for even closer working between subject departments; for the development of new partnerships between institutions to meet the student entitlement at 14–16; for the development of new partnerships with employers to support the greater emphasis on work-related learning both within the institution and through work and community placements; and for a greater level of pastoral care for students whose programme of learning takes them outside their home institution (see chapter 6). Individual teachers, whether already in the profession or under initial training, will need to be equipped (and confident) to teach their subjects to a wider age range, across a potentially greater range of qualifications and through a wider range of teaching styles. Many teachers will need to teach changed specifications in their subjects. We will use evidence from the pathfinders to explore all these potential issues and assess what support might be needed.

3.34 We recognise that the reforms will mean further changes in schools and colleges. For these changes to be introduced successfully we must provide timely and effective support to institutions and teachers. We are committed in the White Paper ***Schools*** *achieving success* to providing a range of support for partnership working, for professional development, and for reducing administrative burdens on institutions and the individual classroom teacher. We are acting on teacher supply and on teacher workload. We are removing obstacles to collaborative working between institutions (see chapter 8). Most importantly we are not proposing to make these changes immediately or all at once: an illustrative timetable is set out in Appendix 1.

3.35 The proposals in this chapter could have implications both for the frequency of assessment for individuals and for the volume of assessment for institutions. We understand the concerns currently being expressed about these issues by some students and their parents as well as by schools and colleges. However, all qualifications need to be both robust and credible. Independent assessment is an important part of that robustness and

credibility. Our emphasis here on GCSE as a progress check and our suggestion in chapter 5 that students should sit qualifications at a time best suited to their individual needs should both help to reduce assessment pressures. If our proposals for new qualifications are agreed, then we will ask QCA to consider carefully the impact on students when developing the qualifications and their associated assessment regimes.

Q: Do you agree with the rationale for the 14–16 compulsory curriculum set out in paragraph 3.9?

Q: Do you agree that mathematics, English, science and ICT should form the core of the 14–16 curriculum?

Q: Do you agree that the areas set out in paragraphs 3.12–3.14 should also be compulsory at 14–16?

Q: Do you support the proposal for the new statutory entitlement to a subject within modern foreign languages, design and technology, the arts and the humanities set out in paragraphs 3.16–3.23?

Q: Do you support the changes to the disapplication arrangements proposed in paragraph 3.24?

Q: Do you support the extension of vocational options proposed in paragraphs 3.28–3.29?

Q: Do you support the development of hybrid qualifications as proposed in paragraph 3.30?

Q: Do you agree that in future all GCSEs should be called simply that as proposed in paragraph 3.31?

Q: Are there other ways in which you think GCSEs might evolve?

THE 16–19 YEARS IN A MORE COHERENT 14–19 PHASE

3.36 We are still in the initial implementation stage of the Qualifying for Success reforms (Curriculum 2000). The first students will complete their full advanced level programmes next summer. Despite the acknowledged difficulties last summer, we are confident that the reforms are now working well. Many more young people are undertaking larger and more varied programmes of learning than before; 60% of students are studying four or more subjects in their first year of advanced level study, compared with 10% before. We shall be monitoring the extent to which the reforms have led to greater breadth in the subjects studied. The new A Level structure, divided into AS and A2, has proved successful both in encouraging progression to the full A Level and ensuring that those who decide not to continue with a particular subject into the second year are still able to gain a demanding qualification in the AS before changing direction. While some questions still remain around the response of higher education to the reformed qualifications, there are welcome signs that, as the first students with the new qualifications apply for higher education, admissions tutors are beginning to respond positively.

3.37 Curriculum 2000 is therefore providing a sound pathway for many of the 50% of young people who should be aspiring to higher education. It includes also the Advanced Extension Awards (AEAs), which the first students will be sitting in summer 2002. The AEA was introduced to stretch the most able advanced level students by requiring greater depth of understanding than A Level. It will ensure that the most able students in this country are tested against standards comparable with the most demanding to be found in other countries. The AEA was also designed to differentiate between able students who can achieve an A grade at A Level.

3.38 The AEA is a paper taken separately from the main A Level papers, but based on the same body of knowledge. In the eyes of some students and teachers, it may seem to demand additional teaching and adds to their perception of the burden of assessment at A Level. We intend to introduce, as soon as practicable, some more demanding questions into the A2 papers which are taken at the end of A Level courses. In this way, the A Level papers themselves would allow high achievers to demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge, skill and understanding without the need for a separate examination paper. The AEA has just two grades, merit and distinction. With harder questions incorporated into the A2, it would be possible for students to gain an A grade "with distinction" as well as a simple A grade. In order to ensure that A Level standards are maintained over time, the existing grades A to E would continue to be set at their present levels.

3.39 Such a change would produce a simpler and leaner A Level structure. It would also meet concerns that A Level is too easy for some very able students. Unlike the simple addition of an A* grade, as was adopted for GCSE, able students would be challenged by the opportunity to tackle more demanding questions. The introduction of the AEA will help us to make sure that this new approach is tested carefully with schools and colleges. In particular, we will be asking QCA to work with the awarding bodies on the design principles so as to ensure that existing A Level standards are maintained.

3.40 We propose to ask QCA for advice on how this might be taken forward across all A Levels, including those in vocational subjects, with a timescale for development. Meanwhile, the AEA will remain in place in 17 subjects and will provide students with an opportunity to answer demanding questions of the kind which could eventually appear in the strengthened A Levels.

Q: Do you agree that more opportunities should be provided at A Level for the most able students to demonstrate greater depth of understanding?

Q: Do you agree that the existing grade range at A Level should be extended to provide greater differentiation between more able candidates?

Q: Do you agree with the proposal to introduce more demanding questions into A2 papers so as to produce a higher grade at A Level?

3.41 The pathway to higher education is broadened and enhanced by the Vocational Certificate of Education (Vocational A Level). We introduced this to establish clearly the status of vocational learning in schools and colleges alongside the traditional A Level. The same issues arise here as for the GCSE, about the desirability of separate labels. In its recent report on the Qualifying for Success reforms, QCA has advised us that in the longer term the Vocational A Level should follow the AS/A2 model. (This would not add to the assessment burden.) We have asked them to develop that advice. When those changes are effected, we intend to consider dropping the vocational label from this qualification while ensuring that it is still of a robustly high standard.

3.42 We expect that, as the reforms to the Key Stage 4 curriculum are implemented and the new qualifications there are developed and become more widespread, the pattern of qualifications and pathways followed post-16 will become markedly different from the existing patterns for many young people.

3.43 We need to ensure that the changes we make to provide greater choice and opportunity from the age of 14 feed through into coherent and worthwhile programmes continuing from 16 through to 19 for all young people, not just those following A Level programmes. We must aim to give all young people a solid grounding in the key skills that will equip them for future study, personal development and effective competition in the labour markets of the 21st century. It is essential that as many young people as are able to do so reach an acceptable minimum standard in numeracy, literacy and ICT at Level 2 (a good GCSE or equivalent, including the key skill Level 2). So we propose that there should be an entitlement for all young people to continue until 19 with study of literacy, numeracy and ICT until Level 2 is achieved. Those who do not achieve a good (A*–C) GCSE in these subjects should be supported to gain the corresponding Level 2 key skills qualifications. Last autumn, QCA provided additional guidance and the LSC adjusted the funding tariff to enable more flexible use of these qualifications, tailored to individual needs.

3.44 To ensure that all 16 year olds can pursue an adequately broad and coherent programme will require some further changes beyond those already in place under Curriculum 2000 and in progress for Modern Apprenticeships. Nearly a quarter of 16 year olds choose to study for occupationally-specific qualifications. Many young people are motivated by occupational components in their learning programmes, and we hope that in future more of these young people will take up Modern Apprenticeships. QCA has recently provided advice on the content of LSC-funded programmes of vocational study and mixed programmes of vocational and general study. The aim of the advice is to ensure that young people, including those choosing occupationally-specific qualifications, do not undertake programmes that are too narrow, are of insufficient volume to provide for further progression, or offer inadequate currency

with employers. In the past too many young people have followed programmes that have proved unsatisfactory and which they have failed to complete. The advice suggests that a framework supported by examples of what its application might mean in practice for individual programmes is likely to be the most effective way of achieving what is needed. The framework will be made widely available to colleges and providers, and to those advising young people. We shall be asking the LSC to take account of it in its funding arrangements.

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS

3.45 Our nation's long and respected tradition of apprenticeship all but disappeared in the 1980s. That was a disgrace and denied industry the skills it needed and thousands of young people a worthwhile qualification. We are now building apprenticeships up again to meet the skill needs of today. The new generation of Modern Apprenticeships, which we announced at the end of November 2001, is an important component of the 14–19 phase. These new apprenticeships are available to both women and men, and cover all sectors of the economy.

3.46 Modern Apprenticeships will play a critical role in helping many young people with a wide range of abilities and aspirations to make the transition to working life and to make progress towards their chosen profession. For young people who leave school at 16 and who can best pursue their qualifications in the workplace, they offer a high-quality pathway. They also offer a way into the labour market for young people with good qualifications from school or college who can acquire practical skills and experience while earning a wage.

3.47 The new Modern Apprenticeships are intended to meet high standards, endorsed by employers' organisations. A National Vocational Qualification will attest their job-specific skills in the workplace. This will be complemented by key skills qualifications and a technical certificate which reflects broader knowledge and understanding acquired through off-the-job learning. Technical certificates within Advanced Modern Apprenticeships will strengthen the prospect of progression to higher education for the more able trainees. Young people with disabilities have successfully undertaken Modern Apprenticeships and we will ensure that they continue to be able to do so.

3.48 We are implementing the main recommendations of the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee, chaired by Sir John Cassels.[13] The Advisory Committee's report recommends that we do more to ensure that all Modern Apprenticeships meet the highest standards and to encourage take-up by employers and young people. We have therefore announced that, working with the LSC, we will:

- ensure that employer places are increased so that over a quarter of young

[13] *Modern Apprenticeships: The Way to Work*

people enter Modern Apprenticeships before they are 22 years old, by 2004/05;

- introduce from September 2004 an entitlement to a Modern Apprenticeship place for 16 or 17 year olds who have five GCSE passes, including mathematics and English. The entitlement will also apply to those without such GCSEs but who are endorsed as suitable following Entry to Employment provision (see below) and who have acquired the necessary basic skills;

- establish a national framework for apprenticeships which defines basic standards and strengthens the relationship between the employer and apprentice. The national framework will include an apprenticeship agreement between the employer and the apprentice, and a standard period of probation. It will also establish minimum durations, with an accelerated option of Advanced Modern Apprenticeship for those aged 18 and over who have already acquired the necessary key skills;

- launch a sustained three-year marketing campaign to promote Modern Apprenticeships;

- introduce a 'programme-led' option that will allow some young people to acquire the technical certificate and key skills in an institutional setting, before they sign an apprenticeship agreement with an identified employer and undertake the on-the-job training;

- introduce a new programme of high-quality learning, called Entry to Employment, for those young people who are not yet ready to enter Modern Apprenticeships or other employment. Entry to Employment will respond flexibly to individual needs, offering a range of provision, including basic skills training.

We and the LSC will publish shortly an implementation plan setting out how we will take forward these and other recommendations over the next three years.

WIDER ACTIVITIES

3.49 In 1999 the Department for Education and Employment established an Advisory Group for Citizenship for 16–19 year olds in education and training, chaired by Sir Bernard Crick. It considered how the aims of citizenship programmes for pupils in full-time compulsory schooling might be built on post-16. (The study of Citizenship is not compulsory for 16–19 year olds.) Post-16 Citizenship should enable young adults to exercise social responsibility and extend their political effectiveness by active participation in their education and training environment and their communities. The Learning and Skills Development Agency has been asked to establish a development programme to stimulate thinking and develop best practice. Since 2001 eleven projects involving sixth forms, colleges, training providers and voluntary and community groups have been testing a variety of approaches to active citizenship development.

Modern Apprenticeships

Claire

Claire was planning a two-year GNVQ course in IT at Newcastle College when she heard about a job with training on a Modern Apprenticeship at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle.

Now she is working towards a permanent technician's job in the University's IT Support Department even though her three-year apprenticeship in IT and Electronic Services: Installation and Support does not officially finish until this April. By then she will have achieved 2 NVQs, one at Level 2 and the second at Level 3, along with two Level 2 Key Skills in Application of Number and Communication. She is already considering further qualifications and possibly a part-time degree course.

"All I'd heard about MAs was that you get paid only £30 a week to do not very good jobs. But when I looked at this one it sounded really good. It offered the same qualification as I would get at College, plus three years' work experience which employers always ask for, and the pay wasn't low".

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3.50 Enrichment activities pursued by young people outside the formal curriculum make a critical contribution both to personal development and to the acquisition of a number of other skills, including the wider key skills. The benefits are welcomed by both employers and higher education. It is important that all young people should be encouraged not only to become active citizens – including through volunteering – but also to engage in wider interests such as sports, music and arts. There are also important benefits from experience of work – through work-related learning or some part-time employment. Participation in all three of these wider areas – active citizenship, wider interests and work-related learning – may form an important part of the new Matriculation Diploma proposed in chapter 4. While some of these activities can be undertaken within the learning day – and indeed many are now – much of the benefit that we seek can be secured too from activity outside school or college and entirely beyond the curriculum.

3.51 As in the 14–16 stage these developments have implications for institutions and providers, teachers and lecturers. We will seek to minimise issues of teacher supply and workload arising from our proposals and will remove barriers to institutional collaboration. There are potential implications for the supply and funding of the range of wider activities in which we want all young people to participate. We propose to test out carefully any changes that are agreed and to ensure that full implementation is managed over a reasonable timescale. We would not plan full implementation before September 2005.

Q: Do you agree with the proposal to relabel vocational A Levels in paragraph 3.41?

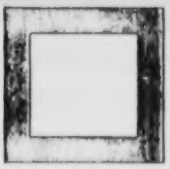
Q: Do you agree that all young people aged 16–19 should be entitled to continue studying literacy, numeracy and ICT until they have reached Level 2 (paragraph 3.43)?

Q: Do you support the framework proposed in paragraph 3.44?

Q: Do you agree that we should expect all young people to participate in active citizenship, wider interests and work-related learning (paragraphs 3.49–3.50)?

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

3.52 The National Qualifications Framework developed by QCA under the 1997 Education Act is intended, among other things, to provide a guide for students, employers, parents, teachers and institutions in understanding and making choices about particular qualifications and progression routes. In the light of the changes to qualifications described in this chapter, we intend to invite QCA to review the structure and criteria underpinning the framework to ensure that it continues to provide a rational and transparent guide for all users. As the framework applies to Wales and Northern Ireland as well as to England, QCA will work closely with the other regulatory bodies in developing proposals.



Chapter 4

Recognising achievement – a new award

Summary: To inspire and motivate all young people to stay in learning beyond 16, a new overarching award could mark the completion of the 14–19 phase. Based around existing qualifications, it would offer all learners a common, challenging goal.

The award would be built around achievements in literacy, numeracy and ICT to at least Level 2 (the equivalent of five good GCSEs); recognise all main qualifications in academic and vocational subjects; and might also cover participation in wider activities.

We wish to consult on the precise form of the award and then to test it in practice. We believe there is merit in an award that recognises and motivates young people towards three levels of achievement:

- an Intermediate award, reflecting the usual entry level for employment;
- an Advanced award, reflecting the general threshold level for higher education;
- a Higher award, rewarding greater achievement at advanced level and reflecting a common entry level for high-ranking universities.

A simpler alternative might be to provide all young people with a Certificate consolidating all their achievements and undifferentiated by level.

4.1 The White Paper ***Schools*** *achieving success* suggested that an overarching award should be developed to recognise the achievement of young people between the ages of 14 and 19. We now set out our proposals in detail.

REASONS FOR A NEW AWARD

4.2 At present attainment at 19 is recognised in terms only of individual qualifications. A consequence is that many young people pursue a relatively narrow programme of study, that activities and achievement beyond formal qualifications are undervalued, and that old and unwarranted prejudices about academic and vocational learning are sustained. We propose that a new overarching award should be introduced to stimulate greater breadth and coherence for all learners to mark the completion of the 14–19 phase and to recognise substantial and worthwhile achievement. As a key goal for the 14–19 phase it should motivate a greater proportion of young people to remain in education and training until 19.

4.3 The title of the award is important. It should signify the status intended for the

award, and must remain relevant and appropriate over time. It must gain the respect and commitment of users of the award and particularly of young people themselves. We suggest that the award be called "the Matriculation Diploma" but would be open to alternative suggestions.

4.4 The Matriculation Diploma would not itself be a separate qualification, but would recognise significant levels of achievement in a range of different areas of learning and development. It would offer a means of recognising that genuine learning can take place in a variety of ways – including general and academic programmes, mixed vocational and general study, vocational study at school and college, and achievements in Modern Apprenticeships in a work-based programme. We are determined that we neither over-burden young people and teachers nor undermine confidence in our curriculum and qualifications framework. So all the options we suggest for the new award are based around existing qualifications and would not require any additional examinations.

4.5 The value of the award would be in raising the aspirations and attainment of young people and helping bring coherence to the 14–19 phase. It will also help them to be better prepared for adult and working life and further learning. It could also be helpful to employers and higher education in recruitment and selection. To be fully successful it must gain their confidence and support, though they will want to be satisfied about specific achievements within the award.

4.6 More specifically the Diploma should make a valuable contribution to:

- raising standards of achievement at age 19 by motivating more young people to stay in learning and providing something for them to aim for;
- widening the horizons of young people beyond the individual qualifications they might take;
- pointing the way towards greater coherence within the programmes young people pursue;
- promoting parity of esteem between vocational and academic programmes of study;
- encouraging the development of the 'whole person';
- conveying valuable information to employers and higher education.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.7 The content and structure of the award should reflect clear design principles. It should:

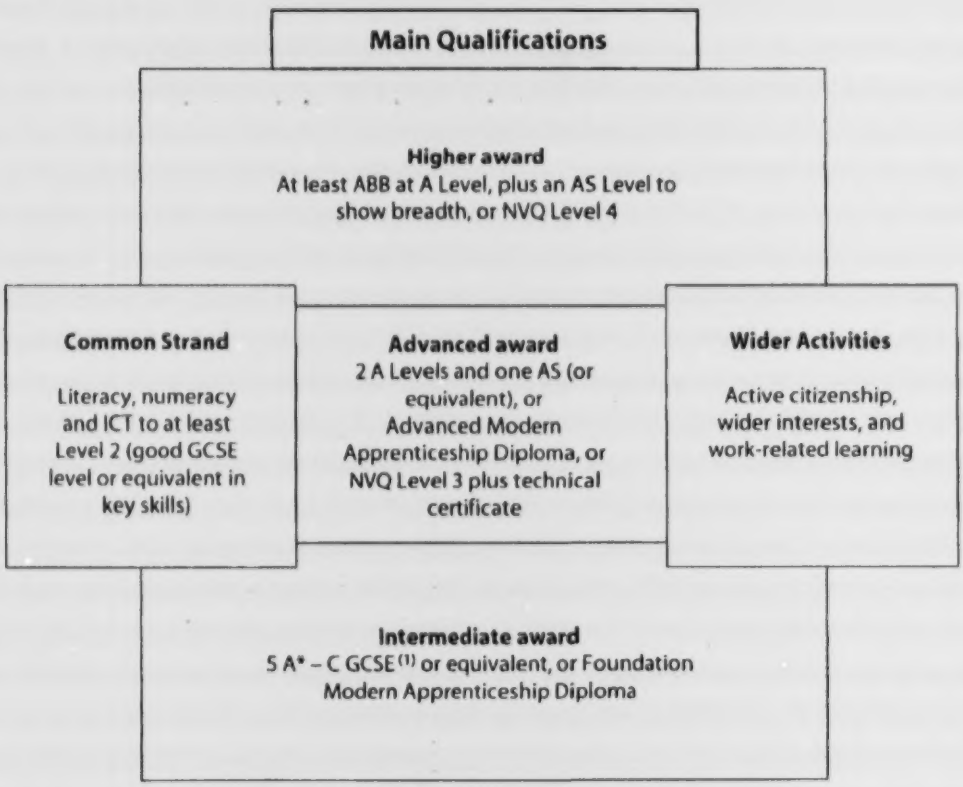
- support progression;
- require the achievement of qualifications;
- encourage breadth of learning;
- motivate young people;

- promote personal development; and
- offer currency with users.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

4.8 We believe there is merit in an award that recognises and motivates young people towards three levels of achievement. But we wish to consult on the precise form of the award, and then to test it in practice. To prompt discussion we think it is helpful to offer both an outline model for such a Diploma, and an alternative proposition for a simple Certificate.
The model for the Diploma is built around three main components, set out in the diagram below:

4.9 The structure of the award embraces students with special educational needs. Some young people with special educational needs will be able to achieve the Diploma at different levels along with their peers, although some may need more time to do so. Some young people, including some who have learning difficulties, will not be able to reach the proposed threshold for an Intermediate award, but their achievements need to be recognised and valued. It would affect the perceptions and currency of the award if it were to be available at levels below the proposed Intermediate level. However, progress should be recognised, particularly for those who make a sustained effort but


Main Qualifications
Higher award
At least ABB at A Level, plus an AS Level to show breadth, or NVQ Level 4
Common Strand
Literacy, numeracy and ICT to at least Level 2 (good GCSE level or equivalent in key skills)
Advanced award
2 A Levels and one AS (or equivalent), or Advanced Modern Apprenticeship Diploma, or NVQ Level 3 plus technical certificate
Wider Activities
Active citizenship, wider interests, and work-related learning
Intermediate award
5 A* – C GCSE (1) or equivalent, or Foundation Modern Apprenticeship Diploma

(1) qualifications gained in the common strand of literacy, numeracy and ICT should be able to count towards the main qualifications thresholds

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do not quite fulfil all the requirements of the award, or who may never reach the standard. We propose therefore that those who do not achieve the award at any level by age 19, but who have remained in learning, should be given a record of progress setting out their achievements. These would be prepared locally and could be presented at the same time as others receive their full awards.

THE THREE MAIN COMPONENTS:

Main qualifications strand

4.10 We suggest that the Diploma be available at three levels: Intermediate; Advanced; and Higher. The Intermediate award would be at Level 2 (five or more good GCSEs or equivalent)[14]; the Advanced at Level 3 (two A Levels or equivalent)[15]; and the Higher would recognise greater achievement (very good and contrasting A Levels, or NVQ level 4). Each level would be attainable through general or vocational qualifications, and from school-, college- or work-based pathways. The levels will allow employers and higher education institutions to see readily what a young person has achieved. The Intermediate award will provide a useful indication of readiness for employment, the Advanced would reflect the usual entry level for higher education, and the Higher would reflect potential for excellent achievement in higher education. All of them include a guarantee of achievement in English, mathematics and ICT, and may also cover wider skills.

4.11 We need to consider the position of general studies A /AS Levels in the Advanced and Higher awards, and would welcome views.

Common strand

4.12 The purpose of the common strand of the award is to highlight the particular importance of attainment in literacy, numeracy and ICT. We propose that the threshold should be at Level 2 for all young people, through the GSCE qualifications of English, mathematics and ICT (or equivalents) or through key skills qualifications in communication, application of number or IT.

Wider activities strand

4.13 Many schools and colleges have asked that young people's achievements outside the formal curriculum be recognised. We want to include wider activities within the award in order to promote and recognise the development of skills necessary for employment, such as leadership, team-working and problem-solving, and activities which encourage young people to live richer, fuller lives and play a part in the community. We therefore propose to recognise active citizenship; wider interests; and work-related learning. Young people could be required to show some worthwhile and sustained participation in each strand between the ages of 14 and 19 to get the Diploma.

[14] 5 or more GCSEs at A*–C; an intermediate GNVQ, NVQ Level 2 or other equivalent qualification

[15] 2 or more GCE A levels, an advanced GNVQ, NVQ Level 3 or other equivalent qualification

4.14 We recognise that there is a tension between, on the one hand, the need for the assessment of young people's participation in these wider activities to be robust and meaningful and, on the other, the potential additional bureaucracy and burden on teachers and others. Those who successfully completed schemes such as Millennium Volunteers, ASDAN, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award could be considered to have met automatically the requirements for active citizenship and the pursuit of wider interests. But these schemes would not cover every young person's worthwhile activity; nor do they in most cases extend to the recognition of work-related learning. We therefore would welcome views on whether wider activities should be required to achieve the award, and, if so, how they should be recognised.

THE FORM OF THE DIPLOMA

4.15 The Matriculation Diploma would comprise a national diploma with a transcript of qualifications, grades, and, if included, the wider activities undertaken. The Diploma should be a document that young people would be proud to receive.

AN ALTERNATIVE – A CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

4.16 An alternative to the award might be to provide all young people with a Certificate at age 19 that consolidated all their attainment in both academic and vocational qualifications. It could also include recognition of participation in wider activities. The Certificate itself would be a common leaving document for all young people in the same form irrespective of whether they had studied academic or vocational options. The advantage of such an approach would be its simplicity, and it would also serve to raise young people's aspirations, though it would not, of course, differentiate by level.

THE AGE AT WHICH THE AWARD SHOULD BE MADE

4.17 The overarching award is intended to signify the end of a 14–19 learning phase, so we propose that the Matriculation Diploma or Certificate should normally be awarded to students at the age of 18/19. Many young people will be able to pass qualifications thresholds in the Diploma much earlier. But we would expect some of the learning – particularly within the wider activities if they are included – to be sustained throughout the phase. Those who meet the requirement for the Advanced Diploma before they are 18/19 might be encouraged to work towards the Higher award.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

4.18 We have looked carefully at arrangements in other countries, at the International Baccalaureate and at the developments in Wales, where a new Welsh Baccalaureate is to be piloted. The International Baccalaureate in particular recognises within a single qualification learning and attainment across a range of subjects and includes a requirement for a study of the theory of knowledge. It meets many of the criteria we are proposing for the award. We know that some schools

offer the International Baccalaureate and we welcome this as part of the drive to offer a diverse range of options to young people. However, the International Baccalaureate was not designed to meet the needs of a high proportion of young people, nor could it be introduced without significant further upheaval. But we recognise the value of critical thinking and theory of knowledge and will develop a new A Level to ensure that it can be studied and recognised within our proposed Matriculation Diploma.

Q: Do you agree that there should be a new overarching award to recognise achievement by age 19 (paragraph 4.2)?

Q: Do you prefer the model for the award outlined in paragraphs 4.8–4.15 or for a Certificate as outlined in paragraph 4.16?

Q: What do you think the award should be called (paragraph 4.3)?

Q: Do you agree with a structure for the award that includes a common strand and main qualifications (paragraph 4.8)?

Q: Do you agree that there should be a record of progress for those who do not gain the intermediate award (paragraph 4.9)?

Q: Do you agree with our proposal that the award should have three different levels (paragraph 4.10)?

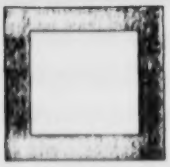
Q: Do you agree with our proposals for main qualifications thresholds for the Intermediate, Advanced and Higher awards (paragraph 4.10 and diagram 1)?

Q: Should general studies A/AS Levels count towards the thresholds for the Advanced and Higher awards (paragraph 4.11)?

Q: Do you agree that the award should have a common strand of attainment at Level 2 in literacy, numeracy and ICT (paragraph 4.12)?

Q: Do you think wider activities should be required for the achievement of the award (paragraph 4.13)?

Q: How do you think the wider activities could be assessed (paragraph 4.14)?



Chapter 5
Pace and progression

Summary: Young people should be able to develop at a pace consistent with their abilities, whether faster or slower. Those going faster might skip some examinations or take them early and use the time gained to study some subjects in greater depth or to start new ones. Those progressing more slowly might take GCSEs (or equivalent) later than age 16.

5.1 Young people should be able to develop at a pace consistent with their abilities. There is already a variety of good practice consistent with this principle, but it needs to be both wider in scope and more widespread in practice. We will build on current best practice to create a more flexible system able to ensure that pupils are properly stretched to their potential and can make the best use of the 14–19 phase.

ACCELERATION

5.2 As the benefits of the Key Stage 3 strategy progressively improve teaching and learning for 11–14 year olds, it may open possibilities to progress through Key Stage 3 in two years for the more able pupils. This would mean some pupils starting 14–19 programmes from age 13 or even earlier.

5.3 Some schools already arrange 'fast-track' sets. It is not uncommon for schools to prepare students to sit GCSEs in mathematics or some modern foreign languages early. In addition all Excellence in Cities partnerships and Excellence Clusters have targets for early entry to GCSE, to cover the most able 5%–10% of their pupils. World Class tests in mathematics and problem-solving are now available for pupils aged up to 9 and 13. Pupils take the tests when they are ready, rather than at a specific age. QCA and its partners are developing a range of teaching and assessment resources around the tests. The first group of young people will sit the AEA, designed to stretch the most able Advanced level students, in summer 2002 (see paragraph 3.37).

5.4 In extending best practice more generally we suggest:

- differential rates of progression should operate for groups of pupils who are able to maintain a faster pace of learning, with deeper understanding. There should be scope for individual programmes for the most gifted and talented young people;

- arrangements should allow for accelerated learning in a range of subjects;

Accelerated Learning
Admiral Lord Nelson, Portsmouth
(Secondary Community School, mixed)

The Admiral Lord Nelson School, Portsmouth, is operating acceleration programmes in all subjects. Between 25% and 50% of the school's 1,000 pupils will participate. The science and English departments intend to accelerate 50–75% of students.

Individual pupils are assessed on their National Curriculum levels on entry to the school and those achieving Level 5 or better complete Key Stage 3 in most subjects in two years. National Curriculum tests are taken in Year 8 if dispensation is granted and students will start their GCSE studies in Year 9.

Most GCSEs will be taken in Year 10. The Headteacher says this frees Year 11 for "more independent learning, more distance learning, more vocational qualifications, more courses linked to the college – a more flexible curriculum that will motivate young people and ease their transition to post-16".

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ICT-Assisted Distance Learning Project for Gifted and Talented Pupils

Five students from four high schools in south Manchester are already on their way to completing a degree by passing the Open University course: *T171 You, your computer and the Net*. Each school chose four students from their gifted and talented cohort and designated one teacher. They all received a laptop computer for use at home.

All participants received training in ICT from industry-based trainers to prepare them for the course. The training sessions took place on Saturdays and in the evenings. Parents and other family members also attended.

The course is taught entirely online. Each student has a personal tutor available via e-mail and is a member of both a tutorial group and a team working on collaborative assignments.

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- accelerated progress in any subject area should be consistent with the delivery of a broad-based curriculum and wider opportunities and should not lead to excessive specialisation;

- accelerated progress for some should not be at the expense of other learners;

- arrangements for differentiation should recognise that pupils may have higher potential in a limited number of subjects, not necessarily across all subject areas;

- use of support materials from Curriculum Online which will be available for all subjects over the next few years.

5.5 Faster paces of learning should be facilitated by collaboration between institutions, in the use of facilities and of teaching staff best able to deal with pupils of higher ability. In many areas, schools and colleges will need to draw on the latest developments in ICT and interactive learning.

5.6 Many young people will benefit from the provision available through the Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth, and the most able might expect to follow individual education plans, negotiated by the Academy on their behalf, which provide coherence as they pursue their education in a range of different learning environments, including online distance learning. A few will be working well beyond their peers at advanced level, potentially making significant progress at Levels 4 and 5 before they physically attend a university.

5.7 Differentiated progress should not turn learning into a race and, although accelerated progression should generally allow for young people to progress at a pace consistent with their ability and potential, broader educational and pastoral needs should not be put at risk. There is a number of ways in which the flexibility these approaches offer can be applied:

- capitalising on accelerated learning in Key Stage 3 and taking GCSE examinations early;

- by-passing GCSE examinations in some subjects and beginning AS programmes early;

- developing subject knowledge and understanding in greater breadth and in contexts beyond those defined by qualifications, with pupils achieving qualifications in the normal timescale.

5.8 A faster pace of learning can offer a number of opportunities:

- some students may use the 16–19 part of the 14–19 phase for broader and deeper study;

- some may take a gap year before entering higher education;

- a few may progress early into higher education.

We are clear, however, that, although differential rates of progress may involve young people sitting examinations at different ages, new qualifications are not required.

5.9 The delivery of programmes to accommodate different paces of learning raises issues around organisation, capacity, and curriculum and staff management, and, particularly with any smaller group teaching, will have implications for costs and funding. QCA has already made available some guidance in this area and we will ensure that further guidance and support materials are developoed where this would be helpful.

A SLOWER PACE FOR SOME

5.10 Alongside arrangements for more able learners, some pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 may need to progress more slowly than others in some or all subjects. Schools and individual pupils are best placed to decide how to support the progress of these pupils. There will be a broad range of options to reflect individual interests and aptitudes.

5.11 If some able pupils sit GCSEs and other qualifications early, then it is reasonable that some pupils should take them later, rather than being entered automatically alongside the majority of pupils at age 16. It may be in some pupils' interests to achieve a higher level later, rather than lower level passes at 16. And for some pupils it may be appropriate for schools to concentrate on securing qualifications at Level 2 in a small number of subjects by 16 rather than more modest attainment across a broader range of subjects. But schools must avoid the risk of more pupils leaving education at 16 with no qualifications. As with accelerated progress, slower progress for some pupils should not be at the expense of other learners.

5.12 Where pupils do delay taking examinations, schools will need to handle sensitively the transition arrangements to sixth forms or to FR institutions. It is not proposed that pupils should remain a further year in Year 11, but that is a decision which could be taken by the school, pupil and family in some circumstances.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE TABLES

5.13 We recognise that both accelerated and delayed entry for GCSEs have implications for performance tables, which we deal with in chapter 7.

Q: Do you support our proposals for ensuring that young people should be able to progress at a pace consistent with their potential and abilities?

Chapter 6

Advice, guidance and support for young people

Summary: Young people will need good, independent advice, guidance and support at key points if they are to benefit from the reforms proposed. Careers education will need to prepare young people for the wider range of choices available at age 14. Parents have a key role to play, as have the Connexions Service and its partner agencies including the Youth Service. Financial support from Education Maintenance Allowances, the Connexions Card and Access Funds improves retention post-16.

6.1 Our strategy for developing 14–19 year olds will not succeed if we consider only their educational needs. We must take account of their broader needs, as they develop as young people. An integral part of our 14–19 strategy is to recognise the additional pressures on young people, and to put effective arrangements in place to help them if they need support. This means advice and guidance, and includes financial support. Young people receive this from a range of individuals and agencies. Their first source of advice and support is likely to be their parents; and the second their schools or colleges.

6.2 We recognise that the greater range of options that we propose should be available from age 14, and the emphasis we are placing on planning for progress throughout the phase towards achievement at age 19, imply the need for additional advice and guidance. This includes impartial advice on careers and wider issues affecting learning. Able young people in groups who have not traditionally considered participating in higher education may need additional support and encouragement. Post-16, young people continuing in full-time education may require some financial support. Vulnerable young people may need support from a range of different agencies, including the Youth Service. This chapter sets out the various strands of the support available to young people.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

6.3 Our proposed strategy assumes that most young people aged 14–19 will be willing to begin to decide for themselves, with advice and support from both the school and Connexions Service, which pathways they wish to follow, whether towards entrance to higher education or training for a particular career.

6.4 Parents will, of course, continue to play a crucial role in inspiring their children to aim high and to continue in education or training post-16 and to seek expert advice and guidance to help them make their choices. LEAs are now obliged to provide parent partnership services to help parents of young people with special

educational needs play their full role in their children's education. We have suggested that parents should be involved wherever possible in the negotiation of the individual learning plans for pupils towards the end of Key Stage 3. We expect those responsible for the negotiation with each pupil to secure parental involvement and to handle this in a sensitive and flexible manner which meets the circumstances of the individual child. Connexions Partnerships and (where Connexions is not yet established) existing Careers Services issue information leaflets for parents, often in a range of different languages. We want to ensure that parents are well-informed about the choices available to their children throughout the 14–19 phase, and about the support available for young people through Connexions as the service rolls out across the country.

CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

6.5 Young people who have received an effective careers education programme delivered through the curriculum, alongside impartial advice and guidance from external guidance specialists, make the best transitions at age 16 and are less likely to switch or drop out of courses in Year 12. In schools where this dual approach has been employed, young people are better able to see their strengths and weaknesses and make successful career decisions; are able to recognise and appreciate the pathways open to them; and are more confident about tackling post-16 transition successfully.

6.6 Under our proposals, young people will be asked to make choices at 14 on a much broader range of options. Young people will be asked towards the end of Key Stage 3 to begin to plan their pathways towards the Matriculation Diploma at 19 and beyond. This will mean not only making choices about options at Key Stage 4, but also having some idea about options post-16, whether in school, college or the workplace. Young people need to be prepared to make these choices at age 14 through an effective careers education programme during Key Stage 3. We propose that the focus of activity should be in Year 9, but with some preparatory work in Years 7 and 8. Consequently, we will encourage schools to develop a careers education programme from the beginning of Key Stage 3, albeit with a very light touch in the early stages. With good curriculum planning and better co-ordination across related subjects, such as PSHE and citizenship, this will not necessarily involve extra curriculum time.

6.7 We are developing a new national non-statutory specification for careers education and guidance based on best current practice. It aims to set out a framework for delivering careers education and guidance alongside PSHE and citizenship. The specification will build on work undertaken jointly with QCA over the last couple of years, which has led to the series of Department for Education and Skills documents on the role of careers education within the curriculum, including *Preparing Pupils for a Successful Future in Learning and Work* and *Careers Education*

in the New Curriculum. The new specification will not prescribe the amount of time that should be allocated to careers education.

Q: Do you support the proposed focus of the national specification for careers education and guidance described above?

Q: Do you agree that it should begin from Year 7, with a very light touch in the early years of Key Stage 3?

THE CONNEXIONS SERVICE

6.8 Advice and guidance offered by the Connexions Service complements the work of schools. Fifteen Connexions Partnerships are now established; the remaining 32 Partnerships will be operational by 2003. The key aim of the Service is to raise the aspirations, participation and achievement levels of young people in learning. Connexions will be a universal service, with all young people aged 13–19 having access to a Connexions Personal Adviser as needed. Its prime focus will be on giving extra help and support to those young people with multiple barriers to learning or at risk of dropping out. The precise role of the Personal Advisers in each partnership will be agreed with individual headteachers and college principals, to ensure that they add value to the work of teachers and others in the schools and colleges involved. The level of support required will vary considerably: some young people will simply need access to information on learning and career options which will generally be offered in a group setting; some will need a range of informal learning and personal development opportunities as well; others may need intensive one-to-one support over a prolonged period of time.

6.9 As highlighted above, the Connexions Service has a particularly important role to play in co-ordinating the more in-depth support needed by those young people who are at risk of disengagement or disaffection. This is best done by bringing together what is provided by all services including youth services, social work, youth offending teams and a range of voluntary sector agencies. The underlying principle is that young people are allocated the personal advisers best placed to support them. This point is further explored in paragraph 6.13.

6.10 Personal Advisers can play a key role in raising awareness about the enhanced options and helping young people to raise their aspirations and to formulate their career goals. The role of the Personal Advisers in supporting young people will depend upon the individual Partnership Agreement with schools and colleges, which will be agreed between the headteacher or principal and the local Connexions Service. The implications of the 14–19 reforms for the role of Personal Advisers could include, where appropriate:

- working with young people at risk of disengaging from learning or under-achieving, their parents and teachers towards the end of Key Stage 3 to prepare the individual learning plans;

Connexions Service

John

John had a difficult home background and regularly stayed out late at night. He had been involved with the Police. He has recently changed school but refused to attend at first.

John's Connexions Personal Adviser made a number of home visits to get to know him in his own environment. His PA began to motivate John by looking at the subjects he liked and how he might cope with going back to school. John's PA worked in conjunction with his Education Welfare Officer and the school to set up a programme to reintegrate John back into class. The flexibility of the curriculum on offer in his new school was important in his decision to return. While John maintained his core subjects and in particular his interest in science, he was also able to pursue more vocational options in technology and motor vehicle engineering at the local college.

The PA helped him plan how he would get to and from school, which in turn gave him the confidence to return. Although John's PA played a large part in helping him to re-build his confidence and return to school, the support of the school was essential in the flexibility of options and support on offer.

John has now returned to school and has attended every day since half term. He is well on his way to fulfilling his academic potential. The help and support that John received from his PA has also helped with other issues including his aggressive behaviour.

- monitoring and reviewing those plans with young people during the 14–19 phase, especially to prepare for the choice of post-16 learning, and confirming that the requirements of the Matriculation Diploma have been met;

- brokering flexible learning programmes in complex cases for young people who will take a mixed general/vocational or wholly vocational route where elements of that programme take place outside the school. This will include a particular focus on the personal support needed to ensure that young people at risk of disaffection are able and motivated to complete these programmes;

- using their broader knowledge of, and links with, local employers and training providers, so that young people considering work-related learning as part of their learning programmes have a better understanding of the world of work and the benefits of work-related learning;

- supporting young people as they move between schools and college/employer-based placements; overseeing the off-site learning for those at risk of dropping out or under-achieving; and being a source of support over issues that arise from young people learning outside school;

- encouraging young people to take advantage of a range of informal learning and personal development opportunities in the wider community.

Q: Are there other ways in which Connexions Personal Advisers should provide support to young people in the 14–19 phase?

THE ROLE OF THE YOUTH SERVICE

6.11 The Youth Service is a key partner in the delivery of the Connexions Service and will provide Connexions Personal Advisers for many young people. Traditionally it has helped young people to reach their full potential by developing an important range of skills which cannot always be experienced within the family or in the classroom. These skills include the ability to be self-critical; to take on new challenges; to take risks; and to make informed choices. Informal learning opportunities afforded by good-quality youth work can enrich the curriculum for young people and, by supporting their personal development and success away from the mainstream curriculum, accelerate the pace of more formal learning. The Youth Service, both statutory and voluntary, will also play an increasingly important role in developing community cohesion and racial harmony.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE

6.12 The new 14–19 phase, with its increased range of opportunities, will be the key to engaging or re-engaging students at risk of social exclusion through providing different styles, content, or places of learning and the prospect of achievable, meaningful and universally-recognised qualifications. However, some groups of young people will be in need of

extra support if they are to benefit from the new phase. These include those truanting or excluded from school; those with learning difficulties and disabilities; those homeless, in poor family relationships or in care; those with low self-esteem; those offending or at risk of offending; those with mental health, drink or drug problems; and teenage mothers.

6.13 A range of services, including health and social services, both inside and outside school and college, is needed to address these problems. The Connexions Service will draw in professionals from partner organisations to offer specialist support to young people facing particular problems. These will include youth workers, social workers, youth offending teams, teenage pregnancy advisers, leaving care advisers and staff from the voluntary and community sectors. One of these individuals may act as the young person's Personal Adviser, under a joint working agreement.

6.14 There is a particular role with vulnerable young people for Learning Mentors and the Education Welfare Services. In schools within Excellence in Cities areas, Learning Mentors are often working with Connexions Personal Advisers as part of a school support team. There is a high degree of flexibility in the model offered to schools, with Learning Mentors often providing additional support for pupils with borderline achievement and for those who have behavioural problems or poor attendance. The Education Welfare Service identifies and evaluates the needs of young people at risk and not attending school, taking account of the underlying problems at home or at school.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT 16–19

6.15 Until 1997 there was little recognition that staying on in learning after age 16 involved a cost to young people and their families in lost income. Some discretionary awards were available from Local Authorities, but the amount was variable and continually being reduced. Young people not participating or who drop out tend to cite cost or the foregoing of income as reasons for doing so, and there is a direct correlation between low participation and poorer family circumstances. We have introduced a range of measures to address this.

Education Maintenance Allowances

6.16 The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a means-tested entitlement which pays up to £30 a week according to parental income. It is available in a third of the country. If young people fail to attend their lessons in any week they forfeit the allowance. EMAs are having a positive impact on attendance and attitude and are leading to an average five percentage point increase in participation in education in the pilot areas.

Connexions Card

6.17 The Connexions Card uses leading-edge smart card technology to encourage and motivate young people to stay in learning after compulsory schooling.

It aims to do this by giving access to a range of discounts (for example on public transport, books and equipment); rewarding attendance and application through incentives and further discounts within leisure facilities and on the high street; and providing information on careers and life choices through a website. The smart card will also facilitate the enrolment process in schools and colleges and monitoring attendance on education and training courses; and provide evidence to help in validating payment of EMAs.

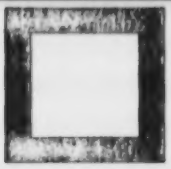
6.18 Following completion of the trials in the north-east, the Card will be rolled out on a regional basis across the country, becoming nationally available throughout England from September 2002.

Access Funds

6.19 Access Funds are used to make modest payments on a one-off basis to young people with *ad hoc* needs, and are administered on a discretionary basis by colleges and school sixth forms.

6.20 These three areas of financial support complement each other:

- the Connexions Card is available to all young people, irrespective of their parents' income and offers a significant amount of financial help and incentive at minimal cost to the taxpayer;
- EMAs are targeted at people from poorer backgrounds, and the size and regularity of their payments mean that young people and their families can plan and budget for staying on in education;
- the much smaller Access Funds act as a safety net for short-term emergencies.



Chapter 7
Drivers and support for change

Summary: Targets and performance tables will continue to play an important role in driving up standards. We propose changes to school performance tables to recognise differing rates of progress at age 16 and to school and college performance tables to reflect national targets for achievement at Levels 2 and 3. We will ask the Inspectorates to report on the breadth of learning opportunities for young people in individual institutions. We will continue to provide support to schools to drive up quality and will be extending similar measures to the FE sector.

7.1 Our vision is of high-quality, diverse provision across the 14–19 range. The main agents for change are the young people themselves and their teachers and parents, all of whom want higher achievement. Targets, performance tables, quality assurance and inspection, and the various measures aimed at school and college improvement all support the drive for higher standards of attainment. Targets and performance measures are closely linked. We are proposing some improvements to the way in which school and college performance is measured, to ensure that the measures properly reflect the 14–19 reforms proposed in this Green Paper. We are determined to remove any possible barriers that might deter institutions from offering young people a range of pathways.

TARGETS

7.2 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced Education Development Plans (EDPs), to include targets for local education authorities and statutory targets for schools. Targets have been a key driver in raising the standards of achievement, which we need if young people are to fulfil their economic and social potential, and they will continue to have an important role in the Government's strategy for raising standards.

7.3 The targets affecting the 14–19 age group are set out in the facing table, which also shows the current position.

7.4 The target of 50% of pupils achieving five or more A*–C GCSEs or equivalent has already been achieved a year early, thanks to the hard work of the pupils and teachers involved. LEAs are required to set targets in their EDPs for all pupils' achievement by age 16. This will continue to be the case in the second round of EDPs, where there is also a focus on narrowing the achievement gap. We also recognise in the guidance on the new EDPs that many LEAs want to move towards a coherent 14–19 phase and we encourage them to do so. We intend that, over time, GCSEs and their equivalents will become a progress check around the

Age	Target definition	1997 achievement	2001 achievement	2004 target/ milestone
14	Level 5+ English	57%	64%	75% [65% floor] **(2)**
	Level 5+ Mathematics	60%	66%	75% [65% floor] **(2) (4)**
	Level 5+ Science	60%	66%	70% [60% floor] **(2)**
	Level 5+ ICT	50%	65%	75% **(2)**
	At least one Level 5+		78% (Provisional)	85% **(2)**
16	5+ GCSE at A*–C (and GNVQ equivalent)	45.1%	50% **(1) (3)**	2002 achievement + 4% points **(2)** [38% floor]
	1+ GCSE at A*–G (and GNVQ equivalent)	92.3%	94.5% **(1) (3)**	–
	5+ GCSE at A*–G including English and Mathematics (and GNVQ equivalent)	83.9%	86.9%	92% **(2)**
19	Level 2 Qualification	72.3%	74.8% **(1) (3)**	2002 achievement + 3 % points **(2)**; 85% **(6)**
	Level 3 Qualification	48.2%	50.4%	55% **(6)**

(1) National Learning Targets

(2) PSA targets (from 2000 Spending Review)

(3) PSA targets (from Comprehensive Spending Review)

(4) Reduced from 80% following consultation (all KS3 targets announced on 2 July)

(5) Teacher assessment only (there is no statutory ICT test at present)

(6) LSC targets published in their Corporate Plan, summer 2001

Note: age 14 targets are expressed as National Curriculum Levels; age 19 targets as National Qualifications Framework Levels.

midpoint of the 14–19 phase. But for schools without sixth forms, the achievement of their pupils at GCSE and equivalent level is and will remain a key indicator of the effectiveness of their performance.

7.5 The Level 2 target for age 19 has been in existence for some years and represents achievement of the skills necessary for employment. The Level 3 target for age 19 was introduced last summer because it was felt right to have a target that was the

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benchmark for entry to higher education, and which would mark progression at age 19 from the target by age 16 of five or more A*–C grades at GCSE (the equivalent of Level 2). This target now forms part of LSC's corporate plan.

7.6 Local LSCs have set targets for achievement at both Levels 2 and 3 in their strategic plans, taking account of their starting position and the needs of their area. In its individual provider performance reviews the LSC will press each institution on its contribution to local area targets, against the background of college benchmarking data, which provide evidence of trends and participation in that area.

PERFORMANCE TABLES

7.7 Performance tables have contributed significantly to our drive to raise standards in the education system. They have increased the focus on raising attainment. The school performance tables provide clear links to national targets at 11 and 16 and evidence of each school's contribution to them. They allow parents to compare the performance of schools and encourage schools to analyse their own performance and look for ways of improving it.

7.8 Over the years, we have sought to enhance the information which the performance tables provide. This year, for example, we shall be publishing for the first time information about schools' Key Stage 3 test results, and about the progress which schools help their pupils make between the key stages in their education, from 11–14 and from 14–16.

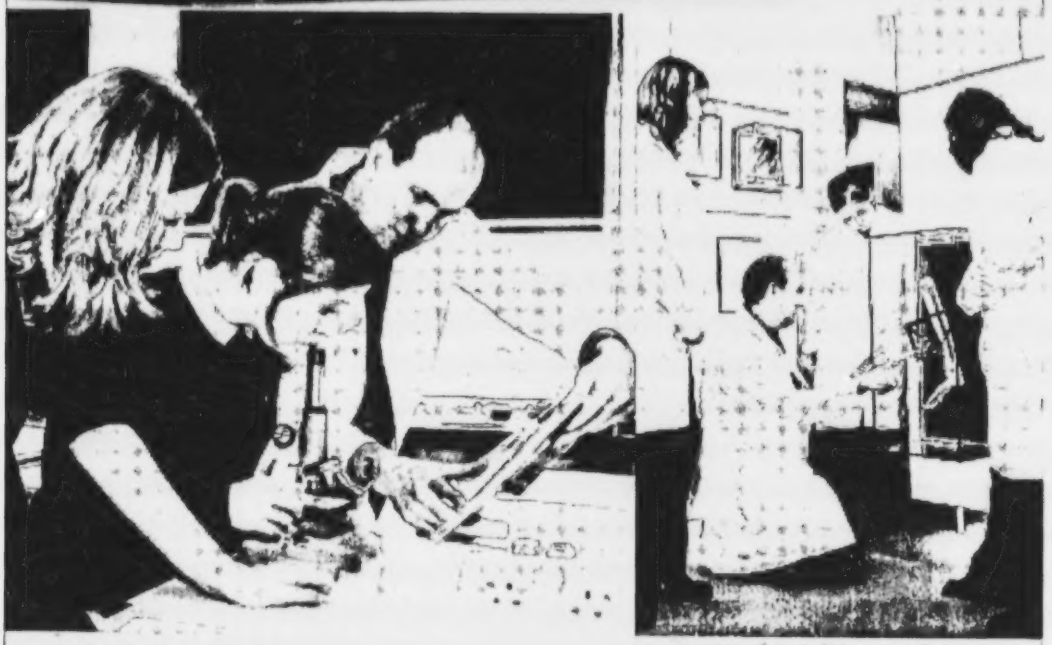
7.9 We now plan to go further. We want to encourage schools to allow more pupils to progress at a rate which suits their individual learning needs. And we want to drive up standards beyond 16 by getting schools and colleges to focus on the target for Level 3 attainment by the age of 19, as well as the existing Level 2 target. These objectives will require changes in the way performance tables are compiled and presented.

COUNTING MORE VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

7.10 The main secondary school performance indicators focus on GCSE examination results. While the tables do report results in vocational qualifications other than GNVQs, these are relegated to a separate column and do not feature in the key indicators upon which schools' overall performance is judged. This means that some schools may be reluctant to enter their pupils for qualifications which are not perceived to count, while other schools which already offer such qualifications feel that the performance tables treat them unfairly.

7.11 Similar issues arise in the 16–18 school and college performance tables, where qualifications such as A and AS Level and advanced GNVQs are counted in the main indicators, whereas other vocational qualifications, such as the BTEC National Diploma, are not.

Work-related Learning Project
York Science, Technology and Maths Project (YSTAMP)
Action Research Project



YSTAMP was a work-related project using high-quality placements and curriculum experiences to improve pupils' understanding of science, mathematics and technology courses. Two schools, Burnholme Community College and Archbishop Holgates, took part, with 25 pupils at risk of not realising their potential, selected from each. Use was made of business partners in the classroom, off-site students visits, a two-week work placement and additional vocational accreditation to add value to the young people's learning experience. The project has raised awareness of science, mathematics and technology among participating students, raised the proportion who are looking to do A Levels or study GNVQ post-16 and has developed in pupils a better understanding of what employers might be looking for in potential employees.

As the project was so successful, it has expanded to include a further seven schools with a total of 151 pupils. It now uses a broader range of work-related activity such as NVQ Units, GNVQs (Manufacturing, Engineering, Leisure and Tourism), and key skills units. The impact of this wider scheme has been to motivate students towards GCSEs and increase the number and range of qualifications.

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7.12 We have therefore asked QCA to work with OFSTED and the LSC to place a value on vocational qualifications – on a scale equivalent to GCSEs and GNVQs – so that they can be included in the key performance tables. Our intention is that as many as possible of the vocational qualifications taken by 16 year olds should be counted in this way in the secondary school performance tables from 2003 onwards.

7.13 In taking forward this work, QCA will also be looking to establish equivalent values for vocational qualifications which are normally taken beyond the age of 16. This work will contribute to the development of the Matriculation Diploma, which will need to recognise the full range of vocational and other achievements which might be acquired by the age of 19, and will enable us to broaden the scope of what we are able to report in the 16–18 school and college performance tables. Our aim is to complete this stage of the work by the autumn of 2003, enabling us to expand the coverage of vocational qualifications in the 16–18 performance tables from 2004 onward.

7.14 Vocational qualifications have value in their own right as part of a fully-rounded educational experience and as a pathway towards further learning and employment. In carrying out the work on equivalences, we shall take care to ensure that vocational qualifications receive the degree of credit in the table that fairly reflects their scope and degree of difficulty. By doing this, we shall ensure that schools and colleges receive full credit for all the qualifications they enable their students to achieve and not, as now, merely for some of them.

7.15 This work will enable us to count a broader range of achievements as contributing to key national targets. However, we acknowledge that the national targets for 16 year olds towards which we are aiming were set on the basis of the current method of measurement, which counts only GCSEs and GNVQs. To ensure consistency, we shall therefore continue to report progress towards national targets on the current basis, excluding other vocational qualifications, until 2004.

Q: Do you support our proposals for extending the qualifications included in the performance tables?

RECOGNISING DIFFERING RATES OF PROGRESS

7.16 Chapter 5 contained our proposals to enable young people to progress faster or slower than the majority of their peers. We deal here with the consequences for performance measures. The performance tables have for several years taken account of the achievements of 16 year old pupils before they reached their final year of compulsory education. These examination results and qualifications are 'banked' and reported in the secondary school tables in the year when the pupil reaches the age of 16. The tables will therefore reflect the results of pupils whose learning is accelerated as part of our 14–19 objectives.

7.17 The position is less straightforward in cases where the school's approach to acceleration is to encourage its pupils to skip GCSE and move straight to studying for AS in subjects where the pupil is particularly strong; or where the school judges that a pupil's best interests would be served by taking some or all of their GCSEs in the year when they become 17.

7.18 In both of these cases, there is a potential disincentive for the school in the way that secondary school performance tables are compiled. The tables report the examination results and qualifications of all pupils in their final year of compulsory education. In doing so, they reflect our targets for 16 year olds, which are also framed in terms of the achievements of all young people in that age group. Pupils who skip GCSEs or who take them or other qualifications a year later than would normally be the case will therefore have the effect of reducing the reported results of a school in respect of its 16 year old pupils. Schools may consequently be reluctant to offer such alternative progression routes to their pupils.

7.19 We acknowledge this difficulty and accept the need to keep the reporting of secondary school performance under review so as to avoid closing off flexible new approaches to meeting the needs of individual pupils. We will in particular ensure that the achievements of pupils taking AS before age 16 are reflected in performance tables. This will be done by establishing the equivalence of AS qualifications to those already counted in the tables as part of the work we have commissioned from QCA. We intend to be able to count AS in the secondary school tables from 2003.

7.20 We accept that, if some GCSEs may be taken later, this may have some impact on the age 16 target for GCSE passes at grades A*–G and on the corresponding indicator in school performance tables, although not, we would expect, on the key A*–C indicator. We recognise that this may cause a problem for some schools. In the longer-term, as the focus moves to performance at age 19 from that at age 16, we may need to reconsider the position of the target for GCSE passes at grades A*–G. In the meantime we would welcome views on how the performance tables should deal with the performance of those delaying taking GCSEs and equivalent qualifications by up to a year.

Q: Do you agree with our proposals for recording the performance of AS?

Q: How would you propose that the performance tables deal with the achievements of those who take GCSE or equivalent qualifications up to a year later than age 16?

FORMAT OF SCHOOL AND COLLEGE (16–18) PERFORMANCE TABLES

7.21 Performance tables for schools and colleges have traditionally focused on a point score approach in relation to the main indicators of performance at A Level and advanced GNVQ respectively. These indicators provide a good picture of the quality of outcomes for those students who

have completed a programme of study, but they do not necessarily paint a complete picture of the institution's performance as a whole. In particular, the indicators do not offer a direct link between performance at the institutional level and progress at national level towards targets for the Level 2 and Level 3 attainment of 19 year olds (see paragraph 7.5).

7.22 We therefore intend to change the format of the 16–18 school and college performance tables, so that the focus is on the percentage of students who complete a two-year course of study and who as a consequence attain qualifications at either Level 2 or Level 3. The details of this will be worked out as part of the annual cycle of consultation on the performance tables. It is likely that the new indicators will be reported alongside the existing point score indicators, to provide a rounded picture of institutional performance.

7.23 We recognise that these are radical changes with significant implications. We therefore propose that their introduction should be timed to coincide with our ability to report the full range of vocational qualifications taken post-16 and with the introduction of robust measures of the value added by institutions to their students' educational attainments. For both these reasons, we plan to introduce the new Level 2 and Level 3 attainment indicators in 2004.

7.24 In due course performance indicators might include numbers attaining the different levels of the Matriculation Diploma.

Q: Do you support the proposal to change the performance indicators for schools and colleges at age 18 to reflect achievement of Levels 2 and 3?

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EXTERNAL INSPECTION

7.25 Regular external inspection of all provision for 14–19 year olds is an important element in the challenge and support to institutions, which are essential to raising standards. All schools are inspected, with a report published, at intervals of between two and six years. Inspections of FE colleges are undertaken by OFSTED with support from the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), each inspecting the provision within its remit. All colleges will be inspected in the initial four-year cycle, which began in April 2001. All training providers contracted to the LSC will also be inspected against the Common Inspection Framework by ALI with inspections taking place on a four-year cycle.

BREADTH OF OPPORTUNITY

7.26 A central element of the inspection work undertaken by both OFSTED and ALI is assessing whether the available programmes and courses are meeting the needs of learners. This already embraces collaboration where it exists, so we shall be asking HMCI and the Chief Inspector of ALI to ensure that all inspection reports include a judgment about the quality and range of provision currently available and the impact of any collaboration that exists. That will be a main focus for area inspections. Inspection findings should

therefore provide clear evidence to support further collaborative arrangements where justified.

7.27 Where the report of the inspection of an individual provider comments adversely on the breadth of opportunities, it will be for that provider to take action, with support from the LEA and/or the LSC, by expanding their provision or by establishing collaborative arrangements with one or more other providers. It will be for the LSC and LEA to take action where that is necessary following an area inspection, in cooperation with providers in the area. Subject to legislation, the LSC will have powers to make statutory proposals for the reorganisation of 16–19 provision in an area for determination by the Secretary of State. (The Government's response to the recent consultation on 16–19 organisation and inspection can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/consultation/listing/htm.)

AREA INSPECTIONS

7.28 Area inspections of provision for 16–19 year olds aim to:

- encourage the development of collaborative arrangements between providers; and
- encourage the LSC and LEA to develop a continuum of education and training and to consider jointly what steps might be needed to remedy any deficiencies revealed.

Area inspections also draw attention to high drop-out or failure rates.

7.29 In the light of responses to the consultation paper, *16–19 Organisation and Inspection*, published in September 2001, the Government has decided to extend the age range covered by area inspections from 16–19 to 14–19, from a date (subject to legislation) to be decided in the light of the development of the 14–19 phase across the country.

7.30 We intend in the meantime that the 16–19 area inspection programme should have a more flexible approach to defining the areas to be covered, so that the areas to be inspected may cover a single LEA; more than one LEA; or part of an LEA. We also intend the programme to be targeted on priority areas where there are general standards or structural issues.

SUPPORT FOR RAISING STANDARDS

7.31 We need to raise standards across all providers, including work-based learning providers. A number of measures are already in place to raise standards of achievement at both ages 16 and 19. These include both targeted and general initiatives. Targets, performance tables and inspection provide spurs to improvement.

7.32 The support in place for schools includes the action targeted at schools achieving less than 25% of their pupils achieving five or more A*–C GCSEs or equivalent; the Excellence in Cities initiative; the Excellence Challenge; and

the School Standards Fund. We will continue to work to raise the standards of achievement of all pupils, while also seeking to close the gap between the performance of the best and that of those groups who currently lag behind.

7.33 FE colleges are fundamental to the delivery of our proposals. Over half of all young people in education post-16 are in sixth form or general FE colleges. Many colleges are delivering high-quality provision across a range of programmes. Over recent years college achievement rates have improved. However, standards are still too variable and there is more to be done to enable colleges to perform consistently well across the whole range of their provision.

7.34 With the LSC, we will continue to work with colleges to transform and modernise technical and vocational education and to raise standards to achieve a world-class system. We are making substantial resources available to support this drive on standards. These include a reformed Post-16 Standards Fund to ensure funding addresses identified needs for all post-16 providers of education and training. The Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)[16] are key to our modernisation programme. We intend that 50% of colleges will have CoVEs by 2004. This will enable them to achieve a step-change in the delivery of vocational learning and in their links with local employers.

7.35 We will maintain the drive to improve the training of teachers and lecturers and to raise the numbers with appropriate qualifications. We have introduced new requirements and standards for both FE teachers and the trainers employed by private training providers. While there are some excellent leaders in the FE sector, inspection evidence highlights poor management and leadership in a number of post-16 institutions. We will be establishing a Leadership and Management College for FE and post-16 in order to provide a national programme of training and professional development that will ensure world-class leadership and management skills in this sector.

7.36 We must improve success rates on vocational courses post-16. Currently, 30% of 16 year olds undertake vocational courses in FE and we need to ensure that significantly more of them achieve their aims. Progression to Level 3 is still too low and far too few students go beyond this point. Some vocational courses are taught well; engage and motivate students; use interesting and relevant material; and are delivered at an appropriate pace to meet individual needs. We want all courses to be like this.

7.37 Students on vocational courses often drop out or fail because they have problems with written work and the mathematical components of their main subject of study. They also tend to

[16] CoVEs will be providers of high-quality, specialist vocational training based in FE colleges and focused on meeting employers' needs primarily at Level 3.

underestimate the theoretical component of their courses.[17] We want to capture good practice in the teaching of English and mathematics on vocational courses and make it available to all providers so that students on such courses acquire the skills necessary to achieve their qualifications; have the basic skills for success; and achieve at least Level 2 (either through GCSEs or the key skills qualifications) by the age of 19.

7.38 One of the LSC's main objectives is encouraging young people to remain in learning and increase their attainment. A key priority in 2002–03 is to make significant progress in raising standards across post-16 learning provision, through targeted intervention in inverse proportion to success. The LSC funding methodology provides incentives to retention and successful completion in colleges in the FE sector, and similar principles will be applied to school sixth form funding and to work-based learning. LSC provider review arrangements, which focus on quality and performance, also include measures to improve retention and achievement. FE sector colleges have annual self-assessment cycles which include the setting and monitoring of targets for continuous improvement. We are considering with LSC the setting of individual provider targets for the improvement of completion rates. LSC monitoring will reveal if particular areas are failing to meet targets; the local LSC will take action to improve performance.

Q: What further measures would help to support improvement in the FE sector?

[17] *Staying the Course: the relationship between basic skills support, drop-out, retention and achievement in FE colleges* – Basic Skills Agency 1997.

Chapter 8
Implementation

Summary: Implementation will be carefully phased in over several years. Changes to the curriculum, qualifications, regulations and guidance will be subject to consultation. We will be testing out enhanced collaborative arrangements between schools, colleges, training providers and employers, from 2002/03, subject to the availability of resources. We will encourage collaboration by removing the barriers; by rewarding and recognising good practice; and by providing some financial assistance. Some additional resources are already available, and we will be looking to increase our investment as resources permit. We will minimise the implications of our proposals for teacher workloads and for teacher supply.

Timescale for implementation

8.1 A number of the measures needed to underpin the new 14–19 strategy are already under way. Others are subject to the passage of the Education Bill currently before Parliament. Collaborative arrangements are already in place in a number of areas between schools and colleges, and with training providers, employers and higher education institutions. Developments in ICT provide opportunities for collaboration between providers without the need for physical proximity. This could be particularly useful in rural areas, but also between providers with different cultural environments.

8.2 In implementing our proposals we will time the changes carefully to avoid clashes with other reforms. These include the Key Stage 3 strategy and the planned changes to qualifications. Where changes to the curriculum are envisaged, there will be consultation on the detail of the changes. These and new qualifications will be introduced to a timescale that allows careful preparation and time for teachers to be trained in any new requirements. We also intend to consult on the detail and timing of changes to secondary legislation and on new guidance.

8.3 We have indicated our wish to introduce some early pathfinders of the 14–19 phase, and in particular ways of collaboration between schools, colleges and training providers, and involving employers. In developing these we will build on activity which is already happening around the country, including the flexible learning partnerships (see paragraph 3.32), while discussing with those involved the directions in which they might usefully be extended.

8.4 An illustrative timetable for the implementation of the proposals in this Green Paper and related changes is at Appendix 1.

Q: Do you agree with the timetable indicated?

Work with a training provider Chelmsford Training Services and The Plume School, Maldon

Chelmsford Training Services deliver NVQs and key skills to candidates in the workplace working towards Foundation and Advanced Modern Apprenticeships. They also deliver a 'Life Skills' programme which helps young people with varying social and personal problems and prepares them for either work, a training programme or further education.

The Plume School currently has 25 students working in partnership with CTS. This is made up of 11 students in Year 11 who are in their second year of the Work-Related Learning Option (COMPACT), and 12 students in Year 10 who have just completed their first term's placement under the COMPACT scheme. There are also two students on extended work programmes. CTS allocate a qualified assessor for each pupil and visit them regularly in the workplace. The students following the schemes emerge possessing a range of qualifications which will fit them for their chosen career.

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COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, TRAINING PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS

8.5 We have said that we do not expect every school or college by itself to be able to offer a greatly extended range of options for the 14–19 phase; that the right way to extend the options available to students is through collaboration with other schools, colleges and training providers, and involving local employers too.

8.6 The aims of collaborative arrangements include:

- wider choice throughout the 14–19 phase;
- increased flexibility at Key Stage 4 in all schools;
- joint curriculum planning between institutions;
- increased flexibility through e-learning and exploiting ICT infrastructure;
- more high-quality work-based training programmes, through collaboration with employers and training providers.

PATHFINDERS

8.7 We need to test a variety of models of collaborative working in order to secure greater choice of pathways. We want pathfinders to:

- test out a range of ideas and discover new ones;
- develop best practice which will inform the staged national roll-out;
- identify barriers to a coherent 14–19 phase and design ways to overcome them;
- demonstrate that the reforms can work in a variety of locations with different social circumstances and different mixes of schools and colleges.

The areas which we choose for pathfinders will need to reflect these objectives.

8.8 We would also want to try out different partnership models, with different partners in the lead. The pathfinders should between them cover a number of different general and vocational options, with a substantial element of work-related learning, including enterprise activity, and links with Modern Apprenticeships. All must cover the whole 14–19 phase. They should include advice, guidance and support; the development of individual learning plans; and the Matriculation Diploma.

8.9 Pathfinder costs will depend on the size of the areas involved, on location, and on how much of a change is involved in a move to collaborative working. The pathfinders will provide evidence of the financial implications of delivering the 14–19 strategy in various circumstances and contexts (see also paragraphs 8.22–8.23). They will be evaluated and the results used to inform the full national development of the 14–19 phase.

8.10 We want to start some pathfinders in 2002/03, particularly in areas where collaborative working is already taking place. We shall be approaching some where we know this is beginning to happen. We would also welcome expressions of interest from others by the end of May. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, we hope to extend the number of pathfinders considerably in 2003/04 and 2004/05 as resources permit.

Q: Do you support our proposals for pathfinders?

Q: Are there aspects other than those mentioned which should be covered by the pathfinders?

ENCOURAGING COLLABORATION

8.11 When the strategy is rolled out nationwide we need not only to build on the lessons learnt from the pathfinders but also create the conditions that will make people want to collaborate:

- by removing barriers to collaboration:
- by rewarding and recognising good practice in collaboration;
- by providing some financial assistance.

REMOVING BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

i. Ease of transfer of funding

8.12 If as a result of collaboration, students are spending significant amounts of time in an institution other than their parent institution, both institutions will need to be suitably funded for what they provide. It would be possible to route all of the funding for these pupils through schools and for the school to make arrangements to reimburse the college for its services. This would give one institution a clear lead in taking responsibility for the student. However, this approach could lead to difficult negotiations over charges. An alternative is for colleges to be funded directly by the LSC for the education they provide. From April 2002 the LSC will be funding school sixth forms as well as colleges and training providers. Switches in funding will therefore be easier to accommodate, and the LSC funding method will make it quite apparent what sum each provider is receiving per student for each course. The LSC also has powers to fund education for 14–16 year olds in colleges. Education of 14–16 year olds in schools will remain funded through LEAs.

8.13 If it is decided to fund students at both schools and colleges, we would need to introduce arrangements for counting the students as part-time in school, in order to avoid double funding. This method would have the advantage that schools would not need to reimburse colleges for the education they provide, but it would introduce some complications of funding method for schools and LEAs. We think there are arguments for both approaches and we would intend to try out both during the pathfinder phase before reaching a conclusion.

Q: Do you have a view on the way students attending both school and college should be funded?

ii. Performance tables

8.14 There is no disincentive to collaboration in the performance tables, whether for performance at 16 or for that at 18. We have announced that performance indicators at 16 will be changed to include a wider range of qualifications; these will include many that would normally be taught in collaborative arrangements. Where students are attending more than one institution, their performance should be recorded for the parent institution at which they are enrolled. The parent institution is responsible for ensuring that its students receive high-quality education or training wherever it takes place.

REWARDING AND RECOGNISING GOOD PRACTICE IN COLLABORATION

8.15 A number of schemes already reward or provide incentives to good performance. These can also be used to reward and recognise good practice in collaboration:

- Beacon schools;
- Beacons in post-16 learning;
- Specialist schools;
- Centres of Vocational Excellence.

Beacon schools

8.16 Beacon schools are good schools which receive special funding to share their good practice with other schools. They are invited to suggest which these areas should be and to submit independent evidence – usually in an OFSTED report – of the quality. In future some will focus on good collaborative practice in educating 14–19 year olds, and the guidance for the next round has invited schools to submit proposals accordingly.

Beacons in post-16 learning

8.17 We expect that collaborative working, which enhances opportunities available to learners, will form one of the criteria for the new arrangements for the award of Beacon status in post-16 learning. These are now being reviewed for consistency with the Common Inspection Framework.

Specialist schools

8.18 The specialist schools programme will have an important part to play in the development and growth of vocational programmes and collaboration between providers. We will reinforce the encouragement to applicants for specialist school designation to be involved in vocational courses. Schools applying and reapplying for specialist status will be asked how they propose to collaborate with other institutions.

Centres of Vocational Excellence

8.19 One of the CoVEs' key operational objectives (see paragraph 7.34 and footnote) is to secure enhanced vocational opportunities for all learners in FE, and for 14–19 year olds in schools. The CoVE prospectus also stressed the importance of building links with schools, and in particular with specialist schools which focused on the same or a related curricular area. The LSC will be monitoring the CoVEs, and we will be evaluating the extent and success of collaboration by CoVEs as part of the overall evaluation strategy.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR COLLABORATION

8.20 We recognise that collaboration will require management; while staff in all the institutions will need to be involved to some extent, an administrative co-ordinator may be necessary. In the pathfinders we will look to see what sort of assistance is needed, and what the costs might be.

Q: Do you support the ways we wish to encourage collaboration?

Q: Are there additional ways in which collaboration could be encouraged?

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

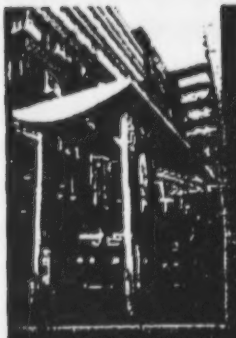
Financial implications

8.21 A significant level of investment will be needed to widen the choice of curriculum pathways available for 14–19 year olds. That is why we are already making some additional resources available as short-term pump-priming:

- £7 million in 2002–03 for 14–19 pathfinders and development work on the Matriculation Diploma;
- £38 million over 2002–04 via the 'Increased Flexibility for 14–16 year olds' programme to support the extension of work-related learning, including support for the introduction of GCSEs in vocational subjects;
- £25 million in 2002–03 for the development of education/business links, including opportunities for work experience.

We will increase this level of investment in future years to sustain further development, as resources permit. Announcements about future funding will be made in the summer.

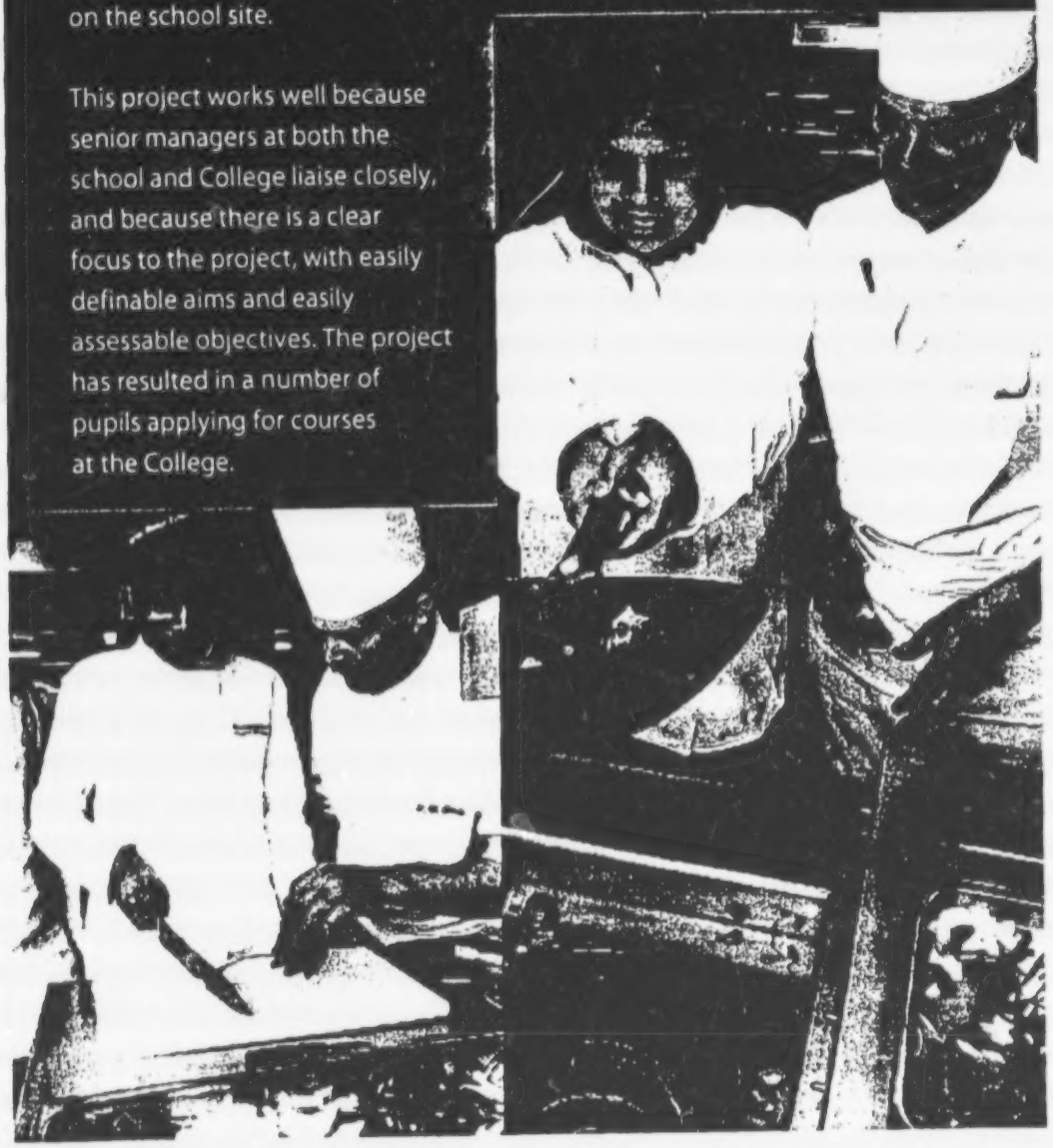
8.22 There may be a question about the funding of vocational courses at 14–16. The FE sector has long had a flexible system of funding that can cope with courses that cost more than others, and with students who attend for different lengths of time. These flexibilities will extend to the funding of school sixth forms from 2002–03 as the LSC takes over their funding. It is for consideration whether these funding flexibilities should also extend to the 14–16 phase in schools. Many vocational courses are likely to be more expensive than traditional general courses. There would be a case for applying additional weightings to pupils



College delivery of curriculum to 14–16 year olds: Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies: NVQ Catering Project with Aston Manor School

Aston Manor is a Birmingham secondary school in one of the country's most economically deprived wards. The school has been working with the College for two years to develop and deliver NVQ Level 1 Food Preparation and Cooking courses to Year 10 and Year 11 pupils. There are currently around 20 pupils on this programme. They have four hours learning in one day each week, for approximately one and a half years. Pupils are taught at both school and college, the mix of location depending on resource need and availability on the school site.

This project works well because senior managers at both the school and College liaise closely, and because there is a clear focus to the project, with easily definable aims and easily assessable objectives. The project has resulted in a number of pupils applying for courses at the College.



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taking these courses: either a single weighting for those on vocational courses, which would be relatively simple; or a variety of weightings such as would be used by the LSC post-16. These weightings would need to be applied in the funding assessments from Government to LEAs, and the formulas used by LEAs to fund schools.

8.23 We do not think the case is yet fully made for complicating the funding of 14–16 year olds with weightings of this type. We propose to try out various approaches – without weighting, with a single weighting, and with a range of weightings – during the pathfinder phase.

Implications for teachers' workload

8.24 In framing our proposals as a whole we have taken careful account of the Teacher Workload Study carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers, and in particular their findings about the pace and manner of change and about the handling of administrative and pastoral tasks in schools. We are applying the findings not just to schools, but also to colleges, training providers and employers.

8.25 As indicated in chapter 3, there are implications for teachers in both schools and colleges arising from the increased flexibility in the curriculum and the wider range of options to be available to young people through collaboration. They will need professional development to enable them to deliver the different qualifications to a wider age range. Although some FE teachers have proven skills and experience in teaching the younger age range successfully, many may need particular support.

8.26 Our proposals for collaboration do imply some changes in how some schools and colleges run their affairs. There will be a need for collaboration arrangements to be managed; this task does not have to be undertaken by teachers, and we will be looking to the pathfinders to indicate the best way forward. There may also be a need for additional support and guidance to young people spending what may be substantial amounts of time away from their parent institution; this again does not have to be provided by teachers. Many colleges have developed student support roles which may prove helpful.

8.27 We have taken care to build on existing structures and arrangements wherever possible and to pace the implementation so that change can be sensibly planned. We have taken account of other planned changes including those for Key Stage 3 and the FE sector, in order to avoid expecting too much to happen all at once.

Implications for teacher supply

8.28 In the longer-term there may be some implications for teacher supply, arising from a greater take-up of vocational qualifications and from the need for additional support to young people in choosing their options and in marking their progress towards the Matriculation Diploma. We will monitor this carefully in the pathfinders, and also

review the contribution which may be made by other professionals working in schools. Collaboration between schools and colleges should enable teachers from one institution to teach students from a number of the providers in a collaborative partnership. As noted in the White Paper ***Schools*** *achieving success*, we are legislating to enable schools to share teachers with other schools and with colleges.

Implications for employers

8.29 Additional opportunities for work-related learning will entail more involvement by more employers, including small and medium-sized enterprises, with young people. We will be seeking to ensure a minimum of additional work for the employers while making sure that the young people are properly safeguarded. We will be looking to our pathfinders and to the evidence from the expanded opportunities for work-related learning from age 14 to see how this is best achieved.

Chapter 9
Next steps

Summary: We suggest a range of ways of obtaining the views of key players on our proposals. We shall be holding a series of workshops around the country between March and May to bring together representatives of schools, colleges and training providers, as well as LEAs, the local LSCs, employers, Connexions Partnerships and representatives of higher education. The views of young people themselves will be crucial, and we propose consultation meetings and focus groups. We intend also to consult parents, higher education and employers. The consultation will run until the end of May, and we intend to announce the results of the consultation during the summer, with the first pathfinders.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

9.1 The proposals in this Green Paper will be of interest to a wide range of audiences. The most crucial of these are the young people themselves and their parents. We set out in paragraphs 9.5–9.8 how we propose to involve them in the development of the 14–19 phase.

9.2 Schools, colleges and training providers, and those who work in them, are another crucial group, as are those who provide support to young people and those who stand behind the providers, such as LEAs, local LSCs and local Learning Partnerships. A third critical group comprises those who might be said to be the beneficiaries of better-qualified young people at age 19: higher education and employers, and the bodies who represent them.

9.3 We are proposing a range of ways of communicating our proposals and hearing the views of those concerned. First, we hope that as many people as possible will read this document. The full Green Paper will be distributed to all secondary schools and FE sector colleges in England. It will also be distributed to those organisations with an interest, including LEAs, local LSCs, the Churches and the teacher associations. We have also prepared a summary version, and one for young people themselves. These are widely available. Copies of the summary will be sent to those who receive the full Green Paper and will also be made available in public places such as doctors' and dentists' surgeries. Posters will be placed in schools and FE sector colleges telling young people where they can obtain copies of the young people's version. Online advertising will also be used and will provide an instant link to the online booklet and details of where to get printed copies.

9.4 Second, we are proposing, in close cooperation with the LSC, the Local Government Association, LEAs and

Government Offices, to run a series of workshops around the country, probably one in each local LSC area, between March and May. These will bring together representatives of schools, colleges and training providers, as well as all the LEAs in the area, the local LSC, local Learning Partnerships, employers, Connexions Partnerships and representatives of higher education to discuss the proposals. These workshops will enable those participating to develop their views on the proposals. They will also help to create networks which may later support the collaborative arrangements which are needed for successful implementation. We shall be inviting national organisations to attend one of these workshops, but will also be holding separate meetings with them to discuss the proposals.

9.5 In collaboration with the National Youth Agency and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Organisations, we will organise workshops for Connexions Partnerships and the voluntary and statutory Youth Service to consider how the sector can support schools and colleges in delivering our proposals.

9.6 We propose a range of measures to reach as many young people as possible. In addition to placing the full Green Paper and the summary version for young people on the Young People's Website (www.dfes.gov.uk/youngpeople), we will organise events for a wide cross-section of young people along the lines of that run on the White Paper on 5 November 2001 by the Save the Children Fund. We will also ask experts to run dedicated workshops for young people in situations where they will feel comfortable.

9.7 We shall invite the UK Youth Parliament, the British Youth Council and others to consider the proposals and will develop focus groups of young people on particular aspects of the policy. These focus groups should be used not only for the development of the policy, but also in its implementation and evaluation. We will also ask LEAs for opportunities to use their young people's councils as a forum for consultation on these proposals.

9.8 Paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4 of this document described the role of parents in supporting 14–19 year olds. We want parents to join in the debate on the 14–19 strategy, and will be encouraging this through the Parents' Website (www.dfes.gov.uk/parents) and through *Parents + Schools* magazine, as well as through some dedicated workshops. We will provide information on a regular basis, building it in to our own publications while also encouraging schools and colleges to involve parents in discussions and to feed back to us the responses.

9.9 The main opportunity for schools, colleges and training providers to become involved will be through the consultation workshops and their follow-up. In addition there will of course be continuing discussions with the national organisations representing the providers and those who work in them.

9.10 The attitude and involvement of employers is critical to the success of the 14–19 reforms. We intend to engage both

with employers' organisations, and with employers themselves, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. We plan to take advantage of existing networks and events to involve employers of all sizes in our plans and to use the Education-Business Links now run by the local LSCs, as well as holding discussions with representative bodies such as the CBI, sector employer organisations and the British Chambers of Commerce. We also plan to invite employers to the consultative workshops. We will expect the new Sector Skills Councils, as they become established, increasingly to help to build stronger links between employers and education and training providers.

9.11 The reforms proposed will contribute significantly to meeting the target that 50% of young people up to age 30 will participate in higher education by 2010. Universities and other providers of higher education will have a key part in ensuring that they do. We intend to engage not only with vice chancellors but also with admissions officers. We plan to visit higher education institutions as well as to hold regional meetings and discussions with bodies such as Universities UK, the Standing Conference of Principals and the Higher Education Funding Council for England. We will invite local higher education institutions to the consultation workshops.

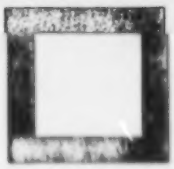
CONSULTATION

9.12 The consultation period will run until 31 May 2002. Responses should be sent to:

Jane Fox
DfES 14–19 Green Paper Consultation
Response Unit
Area 1B, Castle View House
East Lane
Runcorn WA7 2GJ

Responses may also be made online to:
14–19.greenpaper@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

We want to announce the results of the consultation and the next steps during the summer. We would hope at that point also to announce the first round of pathfinders (see paragraph 8.10).



Appendix 1

Delivery of 14–19 learning: illustrative timetable for implementation to 2005/06

Academic Year 2000/01

New AS Levels start

Vocational A Levels start

Academic Year 2001/02

Advanced Extension Awards start

Reformed Modern Apprenticeships available

Key Stage 3:

- Phased English and mathematics roll out
- Year 7 catch up for English and mathematics implementation starts
- 2nd cohort of schools intensive training and support starts in English, mathematics, science and ICT
- Training by LEA consultants in English and mathematics (1st cohort)
- Training by LEA consultants in science
- In-service training on ICT complete

Academic Year 2002/03

GCSEs in vocational subjects introduced

Expanded opportunities for work-related learning available

First tranche of Matriculation Diploma pathfinders starts

First tranche of 14–19 pathfinders begins

National roll-out of Connexions Service

Key Stage 3:

- 2nd phased training programme for teaching and learning in foundation subjects starts
- Annual Year 9 booster programmes for English, mathematics and science start

Academic Year 2003/04

GCSEs in vocational subjects more widely available

2nd tranche of Matriculation Diploma pathfinders

2nd tranche of 14–19 pathfinders

Voluntary introduction of 'individual learning plans'

Different school performance indicators introduced to reflect wider range of qualifications

LSC power to make proposals for post-16 reorganisation takes effect

New guidance to School Organisation Committees on expansion of school sixth forms issued

Key Stage 3:

- ICT tests piloted

Academic Year 2004/05

Subject to resources:

Relaxation of Key Stage 4 curriculum

3rd tranche of Matriculation Diploma pathfinders

3rd tranche of 14–19 pathfinders

Additional titles of GCSEs in vocational subjects available

Entitlement to a Modern Apprenticeship place for 16–17 year olds with five or more GCSE passes introduced

New Level 2 and Level 3 attainment indicators introduced

Academic Year 2005/06

Subject to resources:

Roll-out of Matriculation Diploma begins

Roll-out of 14–19 pathfinders begins

Full take up of 'individual learning plans'

Appendix 2
Key facts

A) Information on young people

Table 1: Estimated population, by age[1] (England, thousands, January 2001)	
Age	**Estimated population**
14	629
15	628
16	605
17	608
18	604
19	615
Total 14–19	**3,689**

Source: Department for Education and Skills estimates based on demographic information provided by ONS and GAD.

Rounded to the nearest thousand

1 Age as at start of the academic year ie previous 31 August

B) Participation in post-compulsory education

Table 2: Participation in education and training, by age[2] and institution, (England, thousands, end 2000 (provisional))			
	16 year olds	**17 year olds**	**18 year olds**
Full-time education			
Maintained schools	178	138	14
Independent schools	38	35	5
Further education	221	185	84
Higher education	0	2	122
Government supported training[3]	47	64	51
Of which Modern Apprentices	*32*	*48*	*43*
Employer funded training	17	30	50
Other education or training	31	37	42
Total Education and Training	**532**	**492**	**368**

Source: Department for Education and Skills, SFR30/2001. Rounded to the nearest thousand, therefore totals may not equal the sum of components.

2 Age as at start of the academic year ie previous 31 August

3 Excludes those also in full-time education

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Table 3: Participation in education and training of 16-18 year olds[4], by economic activity, (England, thousands, end 2000)	
In employment	
Full-time education	447
In training or other education	306
No education or training	273
Total in employment	**1,056**
ILO unemployed	
Full-time education	60
In training or other education	26
No education or training	103
Total ILO unemployed	**189**
Economically inactive	
Full-time education	486
In training or other education	36
No education or training	68
Total economically inactive	**590**
Not in education, employment or training	**170**

Source: Department for Education and Skills, SFR 30/2001

4 Age as at start of the academic year ie previous 31 August

C) Information on institutions

Table 4: Number of schools by type of school (England, January 2001)	
Maintained Secondary	3,481
Special	1,175
City Technology Colleges	15
Pupil Referral Units	308

Source: Annual Schools' Census, January 2001

Table 5: Number of 14 and 15 year olds[5], by type of school attended, (England, thousands, January 2001)		
	14 year olds	15 year olds
Maintained Secondary	559	544
Independent	44	44
Special	10	11
City Technology Colleges	3	3
Pupil Referral Units	2	5

Source: Annual Schools' Census, January 2001. Rounded to the nearest thousand.

5 Age as at start of the academic year ie previous 31 August

Other Institutional information

There are:

- 413 FE colleges in total, including:
  - 270 general FE colleges (58 having sixth form centres)
  - 102 sixth form colleges;
- 1,000 Beacon schools;
- 18 Beacon colleges.

Note: England, current numbers

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D) Qualifications

Table 6: GCSE/GNVQ achievements of 15 year old pupils[6] in schools (England, 2000/01)			
	5 or more A*–C	5 or more A*–G	No passes
GCSE/GNVQ achievements			
(number of pupils, thousands):	302	536	33
– as a percentage of 15 year old pupils	50.0	88.9	5.5

Source: Department for Education and Skills, SFR 45/2001, numbers rounded to the nearest thousand.

6 Age as at start of the academic year ie previous 31 August

Table 7: Attainment rates by age 19 at Level 2 and 3, (England, 2001)	
Proportion of 19 year olds qualified to Level 2[7] or higher	74.8%
Proportion of 19 year olds qualified to Level 3[8] or higher	50.4%

Source: LFS, Autumn 2001. Note that due to sample size difficulties this uses attainment amongst 19-21 year olds to proxy for attainment by 19 year olds.

7 For example, attaining 5 or more GSCEs at grade A*-C, an intermediate GNVQ or NVQ Level 2

8 For example, attaining 2 or more GCE A levels, an Advanced GNVQ or NVQ Level 3

Table 8: Attainment of 5 or more GCSE grades A*–C in Year 11 by characteristics (England and Wales, percentage of cohort, 2000)	
All	49
Sex	
Male	44
Female	54
Ethnic Origin	
White	50
Black	39
Asian	48
Other ethnic group	43
Not stated	26
Parents' Occupation	
Managerial/Professional	69
Other non-manual	60
Skilled manual	45
Semi-skilled manual	36
Unskilled manual	30
Other/not classified	26

Source: YCS SFR 02/2001 (revised)

Other Qualifications information:

- There are 61,803 early GCSE/GNVQ entries made by candidates under the age of 15 (at start of the academic year) in schools and colleges (England, 2000/01).

Other information on young people:

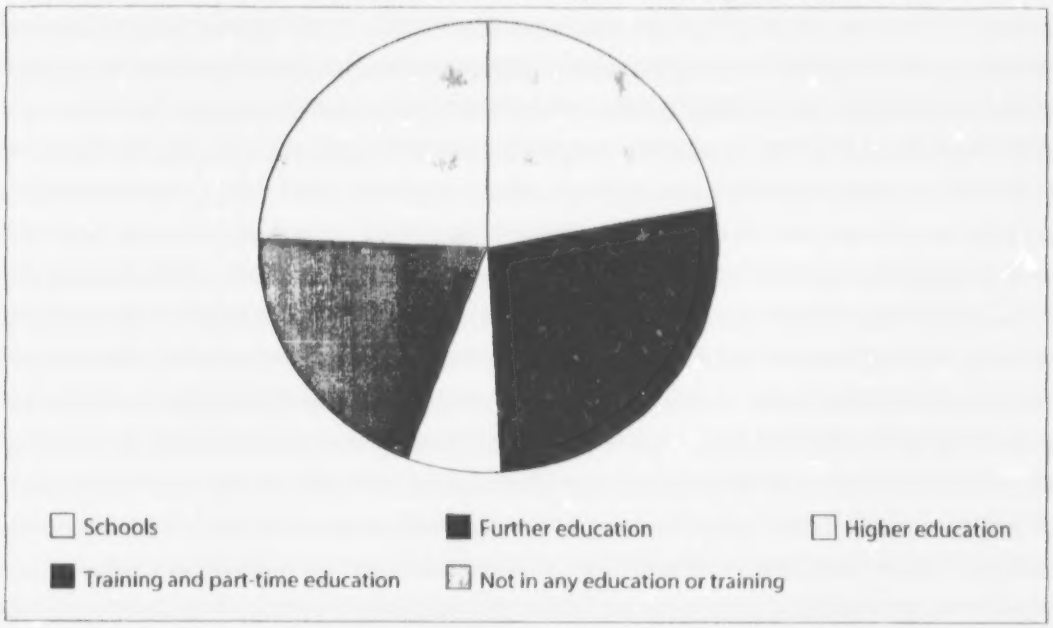
- There are an estimated 258,000 pupils, or 3.1% of all pupils, in schools with statements of special educational needs in England, 2001

  (Source: Statistics of Education: SEN in England, Bulletin Issue no. 12/01, provisional figures)

- There are 47,072 Millennium Volunteers (cumulative total volunteer plans completed, February 2002)

E) Charts

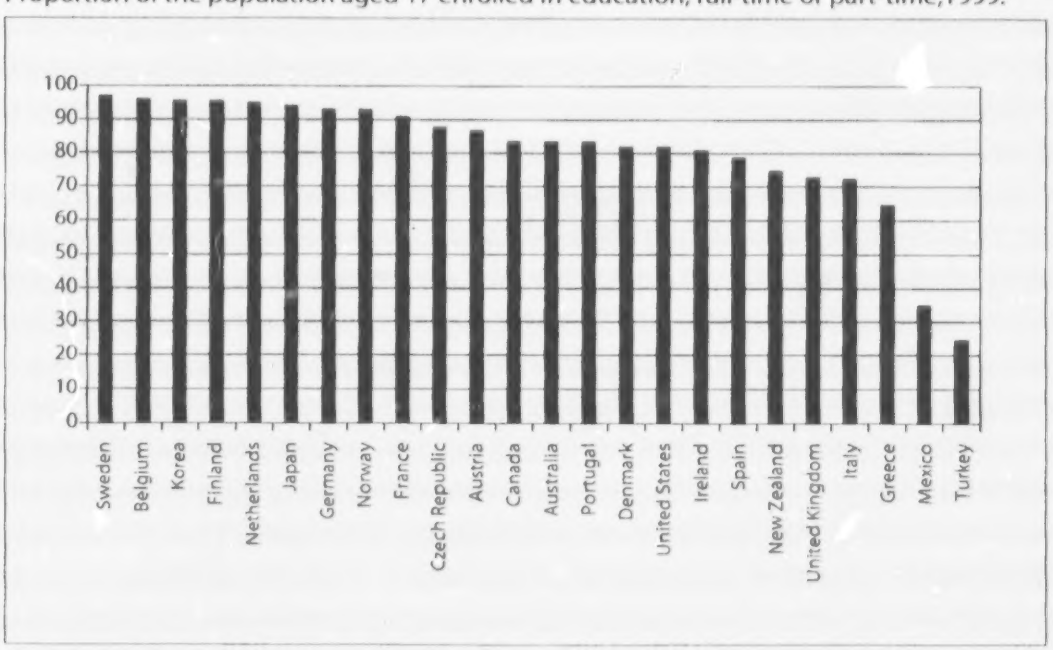
Participation in education and training of 16 to 18 year olds, England, end 2000



Source: Department for Education and Skills SFR 30/2001.

Schools, FE and higher education include participation in full-time education only. Training and part-time education includes participation in government supported training, employer funded training and other education and training.

Proportion of the population aged 17 enrolled in education, full-time or part-time,1999.



Source: OECD

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LSDA responds

14–19: extending opportunities, raising standards

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This paper sets out the Learning and Skills Development Agency's response to the Green Paper consultation 14–19 extending opportunities, raising standards. *The original consultation document can be found on the internet at: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19greenpaper/*

General comments

1 This section of our response addresses broad issues that do not fit neatly into the consultation questions, or which we believe are of particular significance to the overall strategy for 14–19 reform.

2 We welcome the vision set out in the Green Paper, and in particular the acceptance that reform is needed to a system that fails a large number of young people and values only a limited range of achievement.

14–19: the transition phase

3 The Green Paper places great emphasis on the need for coherence for 14–19 year olds. The language of '14–19' suggests that we have institutional, curricular and legal (compulsory leaving age) structures to match that phase, but in reality this is not the case. This affects what the government can realistically achieve in terms of policy. Therefore, strategies to achieve coherence need to recognise:

- the diverse institutional arrangements operating in the upper secondary phase
- the reality that a large number of young people change institutions at age 16
- the fact that education is not compulsory beyond age 16.

4 Moreover, the transition from the 14–16 to the 16–19 phase of education – from compulsory to voluntary participation – remains the most significant transition in the education of young people. For example, it includes:

- choice of a wider range of curriculum opportunities, with significant implications for life chances
- a significant change of ethos, associated with greater maturity and transition to adulthood
- for many young people, transition between institutions.

5 Therefore, we suggest that a key to success in transforming participation and achievement levels among young people will rest on effective strategies to manage the key transition at 16.

- There will need to be a major focus on supporting young people to handle transition – whether transition between institutions or transition to a new curriculum.
- Significant effort will be required by institutions to collaborate to achieve coherence.
- Recognition of achievement at 16 will remain vitally important and qualification structures and recording mechanisms need to ensure that learners have a full and portable record of all their achievements at this stage. While we support the introduction of a Matriculation Diploma, an award at 19 could be too distant to be motivating for a 14 year old. Short-term successes and goals are essential to motivate young people across this phase of learning.

GCSEs

6 In light of our previous point, we recommend that GCSEs – as the major measure of achievement at 16 – should not be diluted or downgraded by becoming a 'progress check'. They are a significant aspect of the transition stage to the new range of learning opportunities post-16, and form a basis for important decisions about progression routes. We would describe GCSEs as marking a crossroads – or major interchange – rather than a milestone.

7 However, alongside this we feel that there is a need to reform the existing GCSE to create a stronger sense of achievement at foundation level. The current model essentially labels those who 'achieve' GCSE at foundation level (grades D–G) as having failed, and the only possibility for progression to intermediate level is to retake the same qualification. This is both demotivating and demoralising for students. A stronger recognition of achievement at foundation level is needed to help motivate lower achieving young people to stay on and progress to intermediate level during their 16–19 years if possible.

8 We therefore recommend that, to address these weaknesses, the award should be developed into a unit-based structure with units achievable at both intermediate and at foundation level. To increase the flexibility, we recommend that assessment become primarily internal, with external moderation, to enable learners to progress at their own pace and to promote greater integration of assessment with the learning process. Learners could build up units, whether applied or academic, towards their GCSEs at foundation and at intermediate level.

The 'alternative pathway'

9 We strongly recommend that this review of 14–19 strategy should result in a re-examination of the general vocational pathway. We believe that this pathway has been seriously eroded to the point that it no longer represents a real alternative to general, academic programmes.

10 The imposition of assessment models designed for academic learning outcomes has undermined GNVQs as an alternative route for those learners motivated by more applied and practical learning. The portfolio and internal assessment that can reliably assess application and practical skills have been increasingly replaced by external testing, which is more suited to academic knowledge and understanding. This significantly changes the nature of what can be assessed and therefore considerably affects learning styles and outcomes, removing some of the practical elements of the curriculum. A similar shift in key skills assessment towards more external testing means that integration of key skills has effectively been lost, further undermining a significant feature of this alternative pathway.

11 This leaves a significant gap in the qualification options available. In fact, anecdotal evidence suggests that, as a result, there is increasing interest from providers in BTEC Nationals in preference to AVCEs at advanced level. There is also serious concern about options at foundation and intermediate levels if GNVQs are replaced by 'vocational' GCSEs assessed on the existing GCSE model. We understand from Edexcel that schools in particular are expressing interest in the BTEC Firsts as a stronger vocational alternative at this level.

12 To meet the needs and recognise the talents of the full range of 14–19 year olds, it is essential that the purpose and design of this pathway be re-assessed.

Pedagogy and curriculum reform

13 Although we recommend reform to the qualification structures, we recognise that change to qualifications alone will not necessarily achieve a more coherent or comprehensive curriculum. Motivating and challenging curricula can be facilitated, but not guaranteed, by well-designed and relevant qualifications.

14 A strategy to improve the quality of the learning experience needs to look at pedagogical skills alongside curriculum and qualification reform. To achieve the ambitions in the Green Paper this must be recognised in the implementation strategy. Wider activities, work-related and more vocationally oriented opportunities for young people will only be motivating if investment is made in developing appropriate, innovative pedagogical approaches that take account of the needs of this age group.

Acceleration

15 We are cautious about the importance of acceleration as a driver for policy formulation in relation to 14–19 provision. On the one hand, we believe that the needs of those who are not capable of acceleration is a more significant issue for policy. On the other hand, we believe that breadth is more important for young people than acceleration.

16 To formulate policy around a belief that acceleration should be an option for large numbers of young people would be a mistake in our view, and will tend to reinforce a 'credentialist' approach to education. The development of young people between 14 and 19 requires more than the achievement of formal qualifications at the most rapid pace possible. The significance of social and personal development and maturation among peers should not be ignored. We therefore believe that the provision of greater breadth and wider opportunities should be given greater policy attention than acceleration.

The lifestyles of young people

17 Just as 14–19 provision should consider personal and social as well as academic development, so too, it should take account of the changing aspirations and lifestyles of young people. Discussion about 16–19 education is couched almost exclusively in terms of full-time study. However, many young people are in fact studying part-time (for example, single AVCE programmes and 2 A-level programmes are not uncommon sixth-form study patterns), and the role of substantial part-time work in young people's lives has increasing significance.[1]

18 However, part-time study is not part of the policy discourse associated with 16–19 year olds and is not reflected in the vision described by the government. The possibility that increasing numbers of young people could be motivated to continue their education by combining part-time study with substantial part-time work should in our view be given greater prominence in policy development in this area.

19 Recognition of part-time study alongside part-time work as a valid route would ensure that the government's vision resonates more closely with the experiences of young people and would help to foster greater interconnectedness between work and study. For example, young people could be encouraged, through their formal studies, to reflect and analyse their working experience or carry out research into the employment sector to develop their understanding of the economic context in which they are working.

Overarching award – Matriculation Diploma

20 We see the overarching award as potentially useful. As it stands it could offer institutions a stronger lever for encouraging breadth and motivating young people to engage in wider activities, and a mechanism for recognising a wider range of achievement, including reflection on learning through part-time work as suggested above. This alone could be highly motivating for many learners.

21 The proposed Matriculation Diploma offers only a voluntarist structure with limited prescription and we would want to leave scope to develop a stronger model in time on the basis of further engagement of key stakeholders. Further detailed views about design of the Matriculation Diploma are included in our response to chapter 4.

Entitlement

22 We suggest that it would be helpful to articulate a stronger notion of entitlement, for 16–19 year olds as well as for 14–16 year olds, to achieve the promise of wider options and greater flexibility outlined in the Green Paper. Without a strong notion of entitlement, there is a danger that schools in disadvantaged areas where low expectations prevail, and where parental confidence to demand greater choice is limited, will offer only a restricted curriculum. However, if entitlement is to be meaningful, it should be based on an appraisal of the practical and cost implications of the proposals and the actual resource available for implementation. (See question 46 for further consideration of this issue.)

23 For 14–16 year olds there is a stated entitlement to subjects beyond the compulsory curriculum, to be delivered by individual providers or by partnerships of providers. We suggest that in addition there should be an entitlement for young people to have access to a specified range of the new GCSEs in vocational subjects. Unless these are available to all learners, their capacity to achieve a high status will be hampered, as they will not be associated with the mainstream opportunities of young people. We welcome the recently established entitlement to a Modern Apprenticeship although we feel that this needs to be specified in more detail.

24 For the 16–19 phase we also suggest that a stronger entitlement is needed. This could set out the broad range of options that should be available to any young person in terms of work-related, academic and work-based options. We believe that development and gradual promotion of an entitlement are needed to raise the profile of the wider options available to young people, and ensure that young people, in reality, have access to the range of academic and vocationally oriented options.

25 In the same way that the Green Paper suggests that the entitlement to access to subjects for 14–16 year olds should be a matter for local decision, we suggest that a specified entitlement, including vocational options, should be determined locally through partnership arrangements, and with the engagement of Local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs).

Implementation issues

26 We welcome the proposal for pathfinders to develop and test out the practical implications of the proposals. There are distinctive implementation issues arising from different aspects of the proposed developments – the extended opportunities and choice proposed, the more varied pace, encouragement of more individualised programmes and the delivery of these through collaborative partnerships.

27 The different elements of the proposals will generate challenges in terms of practical implementation and management, staff development needs and additional delivery costs. (We explore these further in response to questions 35 and 46.)

28 These costs need to be carefully explored through the pathfinders to inform implementation. In particular, we suggest that it will be important to identify and understand the different elements of cost in order to arrive at a realistic assessment of the resources required for implementation and therefore to determine the model of entitlement that can be offered on a universal basis. In our view, it would be preferable for the entitlement to be universal, but realistic, rather than aspirational and unevenly available.

29 While the cost and management implications will be significant, we do not believe they will be insurmountable, if carefully assessed and planned for.

Next steps

30 In responding to the Green Paper, we are aware that it covers a very wide range of issues and that many elements of the proposals are interdependent. For example, if the government decides to opt for a compulsory model for the Matriculation Diploma, there are implications for the qualification reforms proposed in this response.

31 As a result, we suggest that, given the breadth of this consultation and the range of variables, responses may not provide a clear steer for government on detailed reform. We therefore urge the government to view this consultation as the first stage of a longer process of engaging key stakeholders, including employers and higher education as well as the general public and young people themselves, in developing a detailed, long term model for change. This needs to be factored into the timescale for implementation.

32 In the following sections we provide detailed responses to the consultation questions in the Green Paper.

Chapter 1

The vision for the 14–19 phase

Question 1

Do you share our vision of the 14–19 phase?

Yes with reservations

33 We welcome the vision set out in the Green Paper. Above all, we welcome the opportunity afforded by the Green Paper for a wide-ranging and radical debate about how provision for 14–19 year olds needs to develop, taking a longer term rather than a short-term view. In particular, the vision:

- makes it clear that the current system, which does not develop the potential of a significant proportion of young people, is no longer acceptable
- acknowledges that learning that takes place outside formal qualifications and outside the classroom is valuable and can be highly motivating
- indicates the importance of valuing a much wider range of learning – this includes vocational, work-related and work-based, community and voluntary activity, as well as classroom-based learning
- puts the needs of the individual learner at the heart of the system and emphasises the need for young people to be challenged to achieve more highly
- makes a good case for the development of technical and vocational pathways that are as valued as the traditional academic pathways
- recognises the importance of securing the involvement and support of employers in shaping the 14–19 education reforms
- emphasises both the social and economic objectives of education and stresses the importance of breaking down the barrier that socio-economic background can often pose to educational success.

34 As we suggest in our introductory comments, however, it is important to recognise that institutional, curricular and legal structures continue to reinforce a transition point at 16. While a coherent view of the 14–19 phase is welcome, the transition from 14–16 to 16–19 will remain significant and will require effective management if the government is to achieve its aim of raising participation in post-compulsory learning.

35 We appreciate that the government is consulting widely with young people to gain their perspectives on the vision. We believe this is vital to understanding the developing lifestyles and aspirations of young people and how these need to be reflected in choices available to them.

Chapter 2

14–19: marking the start of the phase

Question 2

Do you agree that the aims set out in paragraph 2.6 are the right ones to mark the start of the phase?

Yes

36 We broadly endorse the aims set out. We particularly welcome the recognition of the importance of the ability of young people to plan, manage and review their learning. This should be continuously developed throughout the phase. The early development of these skills at Key stage 3 should provide an ideal foundation on which to build.

37 For the 14–19 phase to be successful, each child will require a solid educational foundation before this phase starts. We therefore welcome the government's focus on the earlier Key stages and particularly its keenness to raise standards and to integrate careers education and guidance effectively within Key stage 3.

38 In addition, we welcome the recognition of the importance of marking the end of Key stage 3 and the start of the 14–19 phase of learning. Key stage 3 could be seen as the end of the period of general basic education and we would support recognising its close through a celebration of achievement to date.

39 Such recognition could also help to create a sense of novelty about the new phase and allow learners to be more psychologically prepared and motivated to commence the next vital period of development. The 14–19 phase should be seen by young people as providing:

- a period of moving towards closer career definition
- an opportunity to raise aspirations through recognition and development of particular gifts and talents
- a period of experimentation through guided choices and self-development
- access to an appropriate range of options leading to achievement of the Matriculation Diploma.

Question 3

Do you support the proposal that pupils should draw up an individual learning plan towards the end of Key stage 3 to plot how they would achieve their planned goals by age 19 (paragraph 2.7)?

Yes with reservations

40 We support the proposals with reservations.

41 Our research into the experiences and expectations of support and guidance by young people in mainstream learning[2] has some key messages.

- There is a need to be able to differentiate between longer-term aspirations and shorter-term goals. For many young people, 5 years is too long a period to plan for, even in the most provisional of terms. They therefore need to feel secure that the immediate choices they are taking will help them fulfil their aspirations. The achievement of short-term goals is motivating and helps to sustain momentum.
- Young people have a strong sense of failure if they have changed course or career aim. For many young people, such changes are inevitable as they grow and develop throughout the phase. Change, where it occurs, needs to be seen as a positive experience. A written learning plan with the route even provisionally in place could exacerbate the sense of failure.

42 Therefore we recommend:

- drawing up a plan for the first stage in this new phase of learning, allowing the learner to hold long-term aspirations while establishing a more clearly defined pathway over a shorter, more manageable period
- allowing the plan to be constantly reviewed and developed as the learner progresses through the phase and makes appropriate reasoned choices.

43 We welcome the recognition that young people should not be burdened with a range of different plans. Account needs to be taken of other wider ranging plans (such as Connexions individual development and learning plans) to ensure that all learning plans are drawn up in partnership and integrated.

44 We fully endorse the centrality of the learner and the support of parents, carers, teachers and Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) in this process. Parents should be an integral part of the celebrations of success at Key stage 3. The process of drawing up the individual learning plan could also usefully provide an opportunity for them to clarify their support role over the next phase. Encouraging and ensuring the involvement of parents / carers is the responsibility of both the school and the Connexions Service.

Question 4

What support should be available to prepare young people for entry to the 14–19 phase (paragraph 2.7):

- *from the school?*
- *from the Connexions Service?*

45 Schools could usefully recognise the start of this phase by a range of activities and changes:

- a managed transition period starting in Year 9 and lasting well into Year 10
- a planned induction and orientation period, involving collaborative partners
- more flexible, individual tutorial arrangements
- subtle changes in school rules (eg uniform requirement; accepted forms of address to teachers; more open access to school facilities such as computers) and increased responsibility for young people, reflecting the start of a transition to adulthood.

46 The Connexions Service, through its Personal Advisers, should be an integral part of the support structure of the school. The Personal Adviser can provide support by:

- working with individuals to identify particular individual strengths, raise aspirations and develop a career orientation
- working with young people with particular obstacles to learning, starting at Key stage 3
- supporting development of teaching staff skills in the provision of effective advice and guidance
- working as a member of the school team in the development of effective transition and induction programmes
- working with partners to ensure that communication and support channels are established between institutions providing learning for young people over the 14–19 phase.

Question 5

Would you welcome guidance on how different models of marking the start of the 14–19 phase might be developed (paragraph 2.7)?

Yes

47 We believe that this would be extremely helpful to schools and their partners. For those involved in the first round of Pathfinder projects, especially those focusing on Year 10, early guidance would be essential to ensure that it is viewed as the start of a new and crucial phase by staff and learners alike.

Question 6

Would it be helpful for schools to have access to a toolkit based on the approaches, materials and processes developed for Progress File (paragraph 2.7)?

Yes

48 Access to a toolkit such as the Progress File (particularly the first three sets of materials: *Getting started*, *Moving on*, and *Widening horizons*) could be helpful. Links could usefully be made between the Progress File as a source of evidence of achievements and the requirements of the Matriculation Diploma.

49 We fully endorse the principles on which the Progress File has been developed, using reflection to deepen learning and positive support mechanisms to raise aspirations, develop self-awareness, and increase responsibility for own learning.

50 We also welcome the recent introduction in the Progress File of materials to be used by those professionals (teachers, tutors and trainers) who will be supporting and encouraging young people to use the Progress File effectively. We note that the CD-ROM that has been produced enables staff to use the *Broadening horizons* material themselves. We strongly support this opportunity for staff to go through a similar process regarding their own personal development as this heightens awareness and improves the chances of successful adoption.

51 Burdensome paper-based systems need to be avoided at all costs and the medium used for the toolkit must be:

- easy to navigate
- able to be customised
- accessible and appropriate to both teacher / tutor and learner.

Thus the introduction of a CD-ROM, which addresses these points, is to be welcomed.

52 Positive approaches that motivate and build rapport between young people and those providing support are essential to ensuring that young people buy into the process. We would therefore recommend that use of toolkit materials be accompanied by staff training to develop these motivational techniques. Establishing the right ethos and values in an institution is as essential as having rigorous systems and procedures.

Question 7

Are there any further measures that might be taken to encourage young people from groups under-represented in higher education to aim for entry to higher education?

53 Reductions in stereotyping and development of high expectations for all, regardless of socio-economic background, should emerge with the new opportunities for curricular flexibility and the development of individual learning plans throughout this phase.

54 Work on raising aspirations and developing expectations of progression to higher education, as the Government's Excellence Challenge Initiative recognises, needs to start much earlier and be spread more widely. The work some universities are undertaking with Years 7 and 8 could usefully be replicated to achieve greater awareness by this age group.

55 Effective management of transitions into, within, and out of the 14–19 phase would benefit from further development as there will potentially be greater choice, more changes, and greater access to other institutions and modes of learning in the future. Vulnerable young people need supporting through these transitions. Assessment of needs and their readiness for change should be incorporated as part of the regular review process.

56 Young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds who are encouraged to aspire to higher education face a number of tensions. In particular, they can find themselves isolated from friends and family who do not share these aspirations and who do not understand them.

57 Support is essential to help the young person understand these tensions and develop strategies to deal with them. Connexions Personal Advisers and mentoring and coaching programmes could be valuable elements of this support.

58 Excellence Challenge activities in working with families to familiarise them with the concept of higher education and allay fears and suspicions could usefully be replicated more widely to reduce these tensions.

Chapter 3

The content of the 14–19 curriculum

Question 8

Do you agree with the rationale for the 14–16 compulsory curriculum set out in paragraph 3.9?

Yes

59 We agree with the rationale for the new 14–16 requirements. In particular, we support the principle that compulsory subjects should allow progression across all areas of learning, avoiding the creation of pathways that depend on students having access to more than the compulsory curriculum. However, given the range of vocational options to which young people might wish to progress after 16, expectations need to be realistic.

Question 9

Do you agree that mathematics, English, science and ICT [information and communications technology] *should form the core of the 14–16 curriculum?*

Yes

60 We agree that these subjects meet the criteria for compulsory subjects. We also support the associated proposal to introduce modern foreign languages in primary school.

Question 10

Do you agree that the areas set out in paragraphs 3.12–3.14 should also be compulsory at 14–16?

Yes

61 We agree that these areas should be compulsory in the 14–16 curriculum and support the introduction of citizenship and work-related learning as new areas.

62 As outlined in the Green Paper, work-related learning could cover a wide spectrum of learning and activity, including enterprise, handling uncertainty, and risk and reward assessment. Such provision will be demanding for schools and we welcome the reference to research being carried out into effective delivery. Support through models and materials will be essential to ensure delivery of high quality provision.

63 We also welcome reference to the fact that many young people are already engaged in part-time work. Work-related learning in school could provide opportunities for young people to reflect on their experience of part-time work, or to develop their understanding of the sector in which they are working, for example through research. Connecting work-related learning in the curriculum with young people's real-life experience may be beneficial.

64 There is a danger that the introduction of citizenship as a new area could be taken to imply that it should be delivered as a discrete subject. Citizenship skills can be delivered through other areas of study, as well as through specifically designed activities.

Question 11

Do you support the proposal for the new statutory entitlement to a subject within modern foreign languages, design and technology, the arts and the humanities set out in paragraphs 3.16–3.23?

Yes

65 We support the concept of entitlement as a means of maintaining choice while increasing flexibility in the curriculum. We would urge however that consideration be given to extending the notion of entitlement to include an entitlement to vocational options. This would help to establish the wider range of opportunities as a right for all learners and reduce the risk of vocational options being marginalised or associated with only lower performing learners.

66 We are concerned that some schools, in practice, may only offer the compulsory curriculum and that the broader entitlement will be more theoretical than real where parental engagement is low. The reduction of the compulsory curriculum and its replacement by an entitlement therefore raises the danger of greater institutional disparity in terms of the curriculum offer. This is likely to disadvantage those least likely to demand their entitlement. While the compulsory curriculum results in efficiencies of scale, there will be logistical problems in offering small classes in entitlement subjects, which could compound this danger. (We explore the logistics involved in collaborative delivery in more detail in response to questions 35, 46 and 47).

Question 12

Do you support the changes to the disapplication arrangements proposed in paragraph 3.24?

Yes

67 We support the redefining of the curriculum and understand that current disapplication arrangements will no longer apply for the majority of students. We would emphasise it is important that the flexibility built into the new curriculum model is adaptable enough to meet the needs of individual learners with special needs.

Question 13

Do you support the extension of vocational options proposed in paragraphs 3.28–3.29?

Yes

68 We support the proposal to extend the vocational options beyond the minimum core, but we have concerns about the design of the new options. Part One GNVQs have been very successful in motivating learners at foundation and intermediate levels. We are concerned that these are being replaced by a qualification based on the structure and assessment arrangements of GCSEs, which effectively deems that those who have achieved at foundation level have failed. We therefore recommend that GCSEs in vocational subjects should be developed with an assessment methodology which is appropriate to the distinctive skills and aptitudes being developed and which positively recognises success at both foundation and intermediate level.

69 We strongly recommend that assessment designed for academic study should not be imposed on applied areas of study. Assessment must be appropriate to the learning taking place and parity of esteem will not be achieved through imposing the same assessment methodology. We explore this issue further in response to question 16.

Vocational relevance

70 To implement the new GCSEs in vocational subjects successfully links with employers and their support and commitment are necessary to ensure vocational relevance. This will present many challenges. Based on past experience, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro businesses are difficult to engage in the process of education and training. Employer engagement is important not just from the student's perspective – ie provision of placements and work experience – but also to support the learning process directly and provide opportunities for teachers to develop and maintain their work-related knowledge.

Breadth in work-related study

71 Although 14 year olds may benefit from work-related options, early specialisation should be avoided. Breadth of study for those who undertake predominantly vocational learning is as important as it is for those who follow academic study. Choice of work-related study should not commit a young person to a single sector or vocational area. Young people must have opportunities for discovery and experimentation as part of a broad curriculum.

Progression issues

72 Equally, entry to apprenticeship at 16 should be open to any student, and not just to those who have completed vocational programmes. This implies that the apprenticeship programme itself is flexible enough to cater for those with preliminary awareness of (or skills in) the vocational area, as well as to those for whom it is new.

73 In addition, progression may be horizontal – to other subjects at the same level, as well as vertical – to higher levels of study. For example, a young person achieving at Level 2 in the general pathway may benefit from progression to vocational or work-related studies also at Level 2. The same is true at Level 3 or beyond. Horizontal progression, before further vertical movement, may be the most appropriate option for the individual, particularly as part of a planned route for a learner to achieve appropriate work-related learning opportunities.

74 We support the view that young people with physical disabilities and sensory impairments should have access to vocational opportunities and would suggest that one way to progress this further would be a closer relationship between providers delivering the forthcoming Entry to Employment programmes and local schools. We suggest, however, that this should apply equally to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and with moderate learning difficulties, as well as those with dyslexia.

Question 14

Do you support the development of hybrid qualifications as proposed in paragraph 3.30?

Yes

75 We welcome the proposal to develop GCSE specifications to a common core and optional general or vocational units. Such flexibility could offer greater choice, enable units to be updated rapidly and enable links to be made between vocational curricula and underpinning knowledge. We believe that a fully unitised framework should be a medium-term goal for reform of GCSEs. We explore this further in response to question 16.

Question 15

Do you agree that in future all GCSEs should be called simply that (paragraph 3.31)?

Yes

76 We are in favour of a single title and agree that the content should be conveyed through the subject title. In addition, we suggest that care is needed in the use of the term 'vocational'. In the post-16 sector, the term 'vocational qualification' is associated with occupationally specific skills and the capacity to carry out a work role, which is quite distinct from the kind of pre-vocational and vocationally relevant skills and understanding being developed in programmes designed for 14–16 year olds. In light of the government's wish to strengthen vocational education in the post-16 sector through programmes such as the Centres of Vocational Excellence, terminology should be used with care.

Question 16

Are there other ways in which you think GCSEs might evolve?

77 We believe there are significant weaknesses in the GCSEs as currently designed.

- First, learners who achieve at foundation level (grades D–G) are deemed to have failed.
- Second, for learners to progress from foundation to intermediate level, the only option is to retake the entire award. This is highly demotivating for learners and success rates are very low.

78 These weaknesses in the GCSE structure must be addressed if achievement is to be improved significantly above current levels.

79 We recommend that to address these weaknesses, the award should be developed into a unit-based structure with units achievable at both intermediate and at foundation level. To increase the flexibility, we recommend that assessment is primarily internal, with external moderation, to enable learners to progress at their own pace and to promote greater integration of assessment with the learning process. Learners could build up units, whether applied or academic, towards their GCSEs at foundation and at intermediate level.

80 We acknowledge that public confidence in assessment is vital to the credibility of qualifications. Therefore, the reform process needs to ensure this is maintained. Reliability of internal assessment will rest on consistency of teacher judgements. To move safely to internal assessment, staff development and support materials should be in place.

Question 17

Do you agree that more opportunities should be provided at A-level for the most able students to demonstrate greater depth of understanding (paragraphs 3.36–3.39)?

Yes with reservations

81 We agree that opportunities should be available for able pupils to develop greater depth of understanding in areas where they have particular talent. We recommend later in this response (chapter 5, Q35, paragraph 132), that reform to A-level structure should be considered, to create a more flexible unit-based structure. This structure would facilitate availability of units at a higher level for those wishing to progress further.

82 In broad terms, however, we believe that the policy priority should be to improve the provision and opportunities available to lower achievers, rather than higher achievers. While we recognise the government's concern to achieve its target of 50% of 18–30 year olds accessing higher education by 2010, we suggest that this will not be reached simply by focusing attention on those of higher ability.

Question 18

Do you agree that the existing grade range at A-level should be extended to provide greater differentiation between more able candidates (paragraphs 3.36–3.39)?

No

83 While we appreciate that talented young people should have an opportunity to demonstrate their talents, we do not agree that the grade range should be extended. Results at AS and A2 already show the actual marks that students achieve when they take the units so there is no obvious advantage to adding a grade descriptor when marks are already seen.

Question 19

Do you agree with the proposal to introduce more demanding questions into A2 papers so as to produce a higher grade at A-level (paragraphs 3.36–3.40)?

No

84 We disagree with this proposal. The new A2 examinations have yet to be taken by the first cohort of young people and it is important to get the standard of the existing A2 established as a consistent indicator of ability, rather than adding more demanding questions.

Question 20

Do you agree with the proposal to re-label vocational A-levels in paragraph 3.41?

Yes

85 As with GCSEs, we support removal of the vocational label from these qualifications. However, we believe that there are weaknesses in the existing framework, beyond titles, that need to be addressed to improve choice and flexibility.

86 Most importantly, we consider that the distinctive learning style of the AVCE requires a distinctive assessment regime to recognise skills and achievements that are different to those developed through the AS/A2. We note that since its original conception as advanced GNVQ, the assessment model has moved towards that of the A-level, depending increasingly on assessment through examination.

The original assessment model, which included substantial portfolio evidence and internal assessment, was more appropriate for measuring the applied and practical learning style and learning outcomes of these programmes.

87 We believe that this change in the assessment model has undermined the distinctive and alternative nature of this pathway. As noted in our response to question 13, we also fear the loss of a distinctive applied pathway at intermediate and foundation levels. It is vital that an alternative, more practical and applied route is available through to advanced level.

Question 21

Do you agree that all young people aged 16–19 should be entitled to continue studying literacy, Numeracy and ICT until they have reached Level 2 (paragraph 3.43)?

No

88 We strongly support an entitlement for young people aged 16–19 to continue to develop their key skills beyond Level 2 and not just up to Level 2, as the paper proposes. If the entitlement is only up to Level 2, it is effectively only a remedial entitlement to the basic skills, which most school-leavers will have achieved by Key stage 4. This is therefore a very limited aspiration that does not go beyond basic employability. The route through to Levels 3, 4 and 5 is very important as an entitlement for young people.

89 However, we believe that the relationship between key and basic skills is unduly complex. We welcome the ongoing work to develop the relationship between them and suggest that there is a growing need for clarification. We would support ICT being designated a basic skill, and basic and key skills being brought into a single framework (preserving best features of the current models such as Entry level). Given that external assessment of basic and key skills in Application of Number and Communication are now consistent at Levels 1 and 2, we believe there is a strong basis for a single framework, with a single title. This would provide a simpler platform from which to determine equivalence with GCSEs. Currently the specifications for the Diploma are complicated by the complexity of relationships between these different awards.

Question 22

Do you support the framework proposed in paragraph 3.44?

Yes

90 We support the framework and the notion that a post-16 curriculum should not be so narrow or shallow as to pose progression or employment problems for individuals. The design of the new generation of Modern Apprenticeships, including as it does NVQs, technical certificates, key skills and on-the-job experience, acknowledges this.

91 Since opportunities for apprenticeship depend on employer demand for apprentices, there is no guarantee that young people will have access to the apprenticeship they prefer. Even the programme-led apprenticeships proposed in the Cassels reforms[3] will not guarantee a place for all young people. Variations in labour market trends over time and between localities need to be accepted as contingencies in any overall programme or curriculum structure.

92 Given the unpredictable nature of the demand for apprentices we believe that there needs to be adequate breadth and depth of provision in the post-16 curriculum for those studying outside a formal training framework. We believe that the capacity of the LSC to fund coherent programmes of study will be more helpful to learners and to institutions than previous arrangements that funded units.

93 At the same time, in recognising that young people develop at different rates and have individual needs and commitments, we believe that it should be possible for them to learn on a part-time basis in the 16–19 years if they so wish, with no compulsion to be attached to a framework.

94 As we argue in our opening comments (paragraph17), it will be important to accommodate young people's aspirations and lifestyles with the range of options available. Many young people are in fact studying part-time (for example, single AVCE programmes and 2 A-level programmes are not uncommon) yet the notion of part-time study is not normally associated with 16–19 year olds and is not reflected in the vision described by the government.

The possibility that increasing numbers of young people could be motivated to continue their education by combining it with substantial part-time work should not be ignored. Encouraging young people to stay in learning through the 14–19 phase does not have to require full-time enrolment.

Question 23

Do you agree that we should expect all young people to participate in active citizenship, wider interests and work-related learning (paragraphs 3.49–3.50)?

Yes

95 We support the implied entitlement suggested by this expectation that young people will participate in active citizenship, wider interests and work-related learning. We suggest that this should be presented as a clear entitlement, establishing that all providers have a duty to make this available, either themselves or in partnership with other providers. This would reflect the position relating to 14–16 year olds, providing a more consistent offer.

96 We support the definition of citizenship as set out in both Crick reports.[4] This suggests a three-stranded approach of social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy. However, the Green Paper could be read to suggest that volunteering alone would suffice.

97 We welcome the commitment that all young people should undertake some work-related learning. This should include not only direct experience through work and community placements and, indeed, part-time jobs, but also learning about the world of work through vocational courses and enterprise activity as suggested for 14–16 years olds. (3.14). Our comments in relation to question 10 (paragraphs 62–64) apply equally to the 16–19 age group.

Chapter 4

Recognising achievement – a new Diploma for Achievement

Question 24

Do you agree that there should be a new overarching award to recognise achievement by the age of 19 (paragraph 4.2)?

Yes

98 The idea of an overarching certificate, graduation diploma or baccalaureate has been proposed in various forms for more than a decade. We welcome a fresh look at this proposition in the Green Paper. We believe there is a strong case for developing an overarching award that could be the focus for the whole phase of 14–19 education, encompassing learning at school, college and in the workplace.

99 Our support for an overarching qualification is based on the view that:

- it will encourage and motivate young people to engage in wider activities and provide recognition of these
- academic and vocational achievement will be valued in the same way, and come under a single award
- it has the potential to encourage increased participation post-16 and to raise aspirations and achievement
- such an award can provide a clear framework without detailed prescription allowing for variety and flexibility to suit individual strengths and interests.

100 The Diploma represents a major change from a post-16 education system that first developed as an entry route to higher education for 3–7% of the population. What is now proposed has the potential to recognise and encourage a much wider range of achievement at 14–19.

101 However, the proposed Diploma maintains a voluntarist approach, and we are concerned that this could undermine its currency with learners, teachers, employers and higher education. The model also appears to be a 'wrap-around' of existing qualifications. Retaining these component qualifications unchanged could ultimately prevent the award from becoming a pivotal feature of the 14–19 phase, as the government intends.

102 To foster change and mark a clean break with the past a less voluntarist model would be required. However, we would suggest that recording achievement of the award in performance tables could be a powerful lever for encouraging its take-up by institutions and learners. In addition, while we would not wish to devalue existing qualifications in the short term, we suggest that there is scope, in the longer term, to develop a stronger, more prescribed award model, based on a more flexible unitised framework. Involvement of employers and higher education in the design of the award and a sustained marketing strategy to 'sell' the Diploma will be key, so that its currency among all end-users is established at the outset and maintained.

103 We note with interest the implementation of a baccalaureate in Wales, underpinned by a credit framework. It will be important to monitor the impact of the approach in Wales to inform evolution of the English model. (We discuss this further in our response to question 30 at paragraph 116).

Question 25

Do you prefer the model for the Matriculation Diploma outlined in paragraphs 4.8–4.15 or for a Certificate as outlined in paragraph 4.16?

104 We prefer the model of the Matriculation Diploma model to the Certificate. We doubt that the Certificate model would achieve any or all of the purposes stated in paragraphs 4.2–4.6.

Question 26

What do you think that the award should be called (paragraph 4.3)?

105 The term 'matriculation' will not support efforts to market the Diploma. Matriculation is associated with the academic route in the 1940/50s and is not a good starting point for an award that is supposed to be inclusive of all types of learning and fit for the 21st century.

106 'Graduation Diploma' runs the risk of being confused with HE graduation, but it does have the advantage of having currency with young people who are aware of its place in the US system through TV, film and literature.

107 We therefore recommend that there is further consultation on titling, setting the Matriculation Diploma within the context of other 'brands' such as Modern Apprenticeships or A-levels so that an overall coherent set of titles is established.

Question 27

Do you agree with the structure for the award that includes a common strand and main qualifications (paragraph 4.8)?

Yes

108 We welcome the proposed structure for the award, including as it does a requirement for core achievement and wider activities in addition to existing qualifications.

109 Work carried out in 1999 by LSDA (then FEDA) with the Institute of Education for DfES, QCA and the equivalent regulatory bodies in Wales and Northern Ireland (ACCAC and CCEA) proposed a model for an overarching award at Advanced level. A key feature of the proposal was for an integrative project that would draw together learning from across different elements of the learners' programme. We believe that such a model has merit in promoting integration of learning and should be considered as a further feature of an advanced-level award.

Question 28

Do you agree there should be a record of progress for those who do not gain the Intermediate award (paragraph 4.9)?

No

110 We recommend that the award be made available at foundation level, as explained below (Q29). There is a danger that the record of progress will be perceived as a badge of failure and demotivate lower achieving young people.

Question 29

Do you agree with our proposal that the Diploma should have three different levels (paragraph 4.10)?

Yes with reservations

111 The Matriculation Diploma should offer a ladder of achievement for all learners. Without a Foundation award the first rung on the ladder is missing. Even though the aspiration may be that all learners achieve at least intermediate level by 19, it remains likely that significant numbers will not do so (as the government's learning targets bear out).

112 At least in the transition phase, a foundation level will be required for learners who have not benefited from having the right start and appropriate options at 14. We recognise that we must be careful that the Foundation award does not become a sufficiency model born of low expectations and the acceptability of low achievement. However, we believe that the Foundation award would help to ensure that the new Diploma system would not label a significant number of young adults as failures at 19. This aligns with our proposals about reform of the GCSE, detailed in response to question 16.

113 We are not convinced that a Higher award is needed. We suggest that this should be considered once awards are established at the existing levels within the qualifications framework – Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced.

Question 30

Do you agree with our proposals for main qualifications thresholds for the Intermediate, Advanced and Higher Diplomas (paragraph 4.10 and diagram 1)?

No

114 We have some concern about the proposed threshold for the Advanced-level award, preferring the threshold at 2 A-levels rather than 2 A-levels plus an AS level. In the short term it will be important to establish the Diploma within the system as the outcome achieved by the majority of advanced-level students. This will be supported by keeping the requirements as close as possible to existing thresholds for progression to higher education. As a stronger model is developed in future, it may be appropriate to shift the thresholds.

115 The levels used are benchmarked against existing general / academic qualifications. Equivalences will need to be developed for a range of qualifications and units in order to provide a stable measure of volume and operationalise the system. They will need to be developed on a rigorous and reliable basis to give the system currency and ensure it includes a wide range of achievement (and learners).

116 If a stronger model of the Diploma is developed in time, it may be appropriate to specify thresholds in terms of credits / points rather than clusters of qualifications. Such an approach, which is being implemented in Wales, could encompass all relevant units and qualifications, would be more flexible and could be adapted and developed to meet learner needs and address changing national priorities.

117 The suggestion that NVQ Level 4 should be part of a higher award introduces potential confusion about levels. The higher the levels of NVQ, the less likely it is that anyone in the age range 14–19 will have the opportunity to work towards or achieve them. We would suggest, rather, that there should be a clearer expectation for vocational or vocationally related qualifications at the equivalent NVQ level to lead to award eligibility.

118 To raise the status of vocational and work-related options, they must have a clear fit with the Diploma alongside academic qualifications. It is important therefore that at Level 2, qualifications other than GCSEs and the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship should be considered as valid in their own right, and contribute to achievement of the Intermediate Diploma if accompanied by the Common Strand and Wider Activities. Similarly vocational qualifications at Level 3 should count towards the Advanced Diploma. This will also be important for achieving equality of opportunity, particularly in situations where the local employment situation may be (perhaps temporarily) too weak for apprenticeship arrangements and learning takes place outside a framework.

119 Nevertheless it is also important to note that delivery of NVQ at Level 3 requires formal workplace arrangements or elaborate substitutes which are increasingly unlikely to be sustainable outside an apprenticeship framework. The apprenticeship framework will be the optimum context for working towards vocational qualifications for many young people.

Question 31

Should General Studies A/AS levels count toward the thresholds for the Advanced and Higher Diplomas (paragraph 4.11)?

Yes

120 As long as General Studies is an approved A-level and therefore represents the same level of demand as other A-levels, we believe that it should count towards the threshold.

Question 32

Do you agree that the Diploma should have a common strand of attainment at Level 2 of literacy, numeracy and ICT (paragraph 4.12)?

Yes

121 We welcome the expectation of core attainment at Level 2 in English, maths and ICT, but would recommend that a greater variety of qualifications at that level be recognised. For example, maths could also include the freestanding maths units as well as Application of Number. Differentiation of maths coverage is currently not clear through the GCSE system and this would help clarification.

122 We are disappointed that the language used in the paper promotes basic rather than key skills. We would also argue that for a higher award, at least one key skill at Level 3 should be required, reflecting the government's current expectation that young people aiming to enter university or advanced training should achieve at least one key skill qualification at Level 3.

Question 33

Do you think wider activities should be required for the achievement of the Diploma (paragraph 4.13)?

Yes

123 We support a requirement for wider activities within the 14–19 curriculum and within this award structure. Such activities form a significant part of young people's learning and maturation and we believe that their inclusion will raise the confidence and motivation of learners.

Question 34

How do you think the wider activities should be assessed (paragraph 4.14)?

124 Assessment of wider activities holds the danger of constraining them in two important ways:

- first, the range of activities which it would be desirable to include within the award might be limited if activities had to be amenable to assessment.
- second, the kind of activity that young people/learners choose might be constrained by the idea that it would involve assessment.

125 We would therefore not support a requirement for wider activities to be assessed. Where there are existing structures for assessment (such as the Wider Key Skills assessment or the Duke of Edinburgh Award) these could be used, but we do not believe that the government should seek to find ways of assessing all wider activities for the purpose of the award. If an integrative project/unit (as described in paragraph 104) were part of the Diploma, then this might also offer a means of capturing the benefits of wider achievements.

126 We suggest that further work needs to be carried out to explore the options for recognition of achievement in this strand.

Chapter 5

Pace and progression

Question 35

Do you support our proposals for ensuring that young people should be able to progress at a pace consistent with their potential and abilities?

Yes with reservations

127 We support the principle that young people should be stretched throughout their education and, as far as possible, progress at a pace consistent with their abilities. The pace of progress needed will vary between young people, and individual young people will be capable of progressing at a different pace in different curriculum areas.

128 However, we believe that young people can equally be stretched through increased breadth, and would strongly favour breadth over acceleration. The emphasis on wider activities and breadth within the proposed entitlement for 14–16s, reflected in the proposals for the Matriculation Diploma, promises increasing opportunities for young people to be stretched through breadth of study and wider activities.

129 It is important that, in the pursuit of academic achievement, we do not lose sight of the less tangible, more social aspects of education, and the importance of relationships with peers in the personal development of young people. The danger of encouraging more able learners to progress significantly faster than their peers is that they lose their relationship with their cohort, arguably sacrificing wider social and personal benefits for academic achievement. Young people need the social, personal and wider key skills to be able to integrate effectively into a variety of contexts and to cooperate successfully with others. A purely academic diet may not be the best way of achieving this.

130 We do not support the proposal that some young people should be able to skip GCSE to avoid delay in their learning, while others have to take exams. The stage of learning measured through GCSE needs to be passed through by all learners and the assessment regime should be capable of marking this without disruption to the learning process. However, current arrangements require young people's learning to fit with a rigid external assessment timetable. Because of the large number of subjects studied at GCSE, this results in a challenging period of examinations, which is stressful for young people and does not promote optimum performance.

131 We recommend earlier in this response (Chapter 3, question 16, paragraph 79) that GCSE be reformed into a unit-based structure with units achievable at both foundation and intermediate levels. We also recommend that they should be internally assessed with external moderation. This would introduce much-needed flexibility into the system and allow learners to build up achievement and progress over the 14–16 phase.

132 In the medium term we recommend that consideration be given to similar reform to the A-level design and assessment arrangements in order to create a single qualifications structure for the 14–19 phase, culminating in an overarching award, built from modules or units at different levels. Such a system would truly allow young people to build up their achievement flexibly and systematically according to their capacity.

133 Overall we believe that the most significant challenge for a 14–19 strategy is not to accelerate the pace of the most able, but to ensure that there are appropriate opportunities for those who progress more slowly and whose achievements are modest. In our view these learners are least well served in current arrangements.

Implementation issues

134 There are significant operational challenges and logistics involved in delivering significantly increased flexibility in the pace of learning for young people even where the young person remains with a single provider. Individualised programmes that relate to the pace of a young person's learning will have implications for:

- timetabling, classroom management and class size
- tracking and supporting progress and achievement
- provision of individualised learning materials
- skill development for many teachers in new approaches
- ensuring adequate progression opportunities are available.

135 In circumstances where young people need to move between institutions, there will be additional complexities. While a school may arrange for provision to be available through partner schools or colleges, young people may not be prepared to move between institutions to obtain their full entitlement. In addition, parents may not be comfortable with such arrangements. Real mobility between schools and colleges of both students and teachers is likely to take time and resources to establish and will create significant operational challenges.

136 For collaborative delivery to become a reality and for its operation to be smooth, models and approaches to handling practical issues need to be developed and tested. We suggest therefore that the pathfinders pay particular attention to the following:

- implications for advice and guidance
- joint curriculum and timetable planning
- tracking learners' achievements and mapping progression opportunities across institutions
- practical problems of travel and associated downtime for teachers and for learners
- costs and institutional overheads (see our response to questions 46 and 47 for comments on costs).

137 We recommend that the pathfinders explicitly develop practice in these areas and that systematic support be available to develop the capacity of providers to handle such flexibility appropriately.

The potential of ICT

138 We agree that careful use of technology could potentially enhance the capacity of teachers to enable young people within a single group to progress at more differentiated rates, and thus facilitate the flexible pace and progression that the Green Paper envisages. In addition, ICT may allow link ups between institutions to reduce the need for physical movement of students and staff between institutions.

139 However, developments will need to take account of the pedagogical implications of using ICT. New teaching styles will need to be developed, tested and adopted before technology can be fully exploited in mixed pace learning settings. Exploration through the pathfinders of the practical possibilities and economic implications of using ICT in these ways should inform a strategy in this area.

Chapter 6

Advice, guidance and support for young people

Question 36

Do you support the proposed focus of the national specification for careers education and guidance described in paragraph 6.7?

Yes

140 We welcome the proposal to develop a new national specification for careers education and guidance (CEG) alongside PSHE and Citizenship at Key stage 4.

141 Young people need to be able to make effective choices and navigate their way through a wide range of opportunities in the 14–19 phase. To do this they need a growing awareness of their own potential and future roles, and the ability to make effective decisions with regard to their own lives. We would welcome the creation of an entitlement to personal development throughout this phase that required an integrated approach comprising the new specification for CEG, PSHE, Citizenship, enrichment activities and pastoral support.

142 We would therefore hope that the new CEG specification would span the whole of the 14–19 phase and include:

- understanding the role of work – individual / family / community
- understanding the labour market – sector skills, opportunities
- developing transferable employability skills
- careers management – including periods of unemployment or inactivity
- exploring and raising aspirations
- developing an understanding of own preferences and strengths
- exploring preferred choices and progression routes
- retaining flexibility for changes of mind and other paths to be followed.

143 It is important to recognise that not all young people will be 'career-sure' by the time they reach 19. Young people should be encouraged to explore possibilities and develop new interests as they progress through the phase. All young people need to be catered for, from those who are career-sure at a very early age to those young people who, at 19, have still not fixed on what they want to do.

Question 37

Do you agree that it should begin from Year 7, with a very light touch in the early years of Key stage 3?

Yes

144 We agree that CEG should start early and that a very light touch at that stage is essential. It should be of a very general nature and integrated wherever possible with the curriculum to avoid categorisation of young people and their career potential. Early stereotyping and labelling often result in lowered aspirations.

Question 38

Are there other ways in which Connexions Personal Advisers should provide support to young people in the 14–19 phase (paragraphs 6.8–6.10)?

145 The integration of support roles in different institutions is essential to achieving cohesion and continuity for individual learners. Connexions partnership agreements (6.10) should be the result of a process of service design, need identification and negotiation.

146 All partnership agreements should clearly provide a support service for all learners, flexible enough to provide both long-term and short-term support, ranging from one-to-one intensive to more general support.

147 The proposals contained in the Green Paper put support and guidance as a crucial, central service to be accessed by all young people. Research with young people on their support and guidance experiences and expectations[5] concludes that the best way to raise young people's aspirations is to establish a support service that is stigma-free. Seeking guidance and support needs to be seen as normal, rather than the exception when there is a problem. In this way a positive focus on preventing disengagement will be possible.

148A few colleges are branding the whole of their student services as Connexions, creating an integrated, all-embracing service. We strongly endorse this approach, which, together with the proposed extension of Connexions Direct as a nationally accessible 24-hour service, allows the creation of a seamless support service which is flexible and responsive.

149 Specifically, additional activities by Personal Advisers might include:

- complementing the work of tutors in promoting higher aspirations, especially with those who are being encouraged to move out of their traditional context, such as through the Excellence Challenge Initiative
- bringing together other agencies and initiatives with an interest in raising aspirations and achievement in young people, such as coaching and peer mentoring schemes, community projects, sex and health education initiatives
- training and support for teaching staff, particularly in the development of specific support techniques.

Chapter 7

Drivers and support for change

150 We welcome the commitment to a vision of high-quality, diverse provision across the 14–19 age range, expressed in paragraph 7.1 of the Green Paper. Equally, we support the stated determination to remove any possible barriers that might deter institutions from offering young people a range of learning pathways. In order to achieve these goals, we believe that targets and performance measures should be designed so that:

- they capture the widest possible range of learners' achievements
- they provide valid indicators of 'distance travelled' by learners (that is, they incorporate measures of value added).

151 Inadequate understanding of or attention to these features is likely to distort the behaviour of individual schools and colleges, at the expense of those learners who need the greatest support. If certain types of achievement are not recognised, then providers will be discouraged from catering fully for the students concerned, or will feel that they have been treated unfairly if they do so. Likewise, performance tables that encourage media and public to rank providers according to 'raw' achievement rates, unadjusted for value added, lead to unfair comparisons and are thus a disincentive to the enrolment and retention of learners with low prior attainment and/or behavioural difficulties.

152 Our responses to the specific questions relating to this chapter of the Green Paper are made in the context of the principles articulated above.

Question 39

Do you support our proposals for extending the qualifications included in the performance tables (paragraphs 7.10–7.15)?

Yes

153 We strongly support the intention to move progressively towards the inclusion of a full range of vocational qualifications within the performance tables, so that those taken by 16 year olds will be counted on an equivalent basis to GCSEs and GNVQs from 2003 onwards, and those normally taken at 17 or 18 will be included from 2004. If vocational qualifications are to play their intended role in contributing to individuals' acquisition of skills, and providing the nation with a qualified workforce, then it is vital that as much as possible is done to ensure that they are given proper recognition. As stated in paragraph 7.14 of the Green Paper, this requires that schools and colleges receive full credit for all the qualifications they enable their students to achieve and not, as now, merely some of them.

154 We would stress the importance of ensuring that achievement within Modern Apprenticeships is recorded in the performance table. The Green Paper is currently unclear about this, even though their value is recognised in chapter 3.

155 One issue not addressed in the Green Paper is that of recognition for joint provision of the curriculum between schools and colleges. In future an increasing number of 14–16 year olds will attend college for part of their studies – towards vocational GCSEs or other vocational qualifications. Colleges are unlikely to be encouraged in their commitment to the success of these arrangements if they do not receive any recognition in the performance tables for their contribution to the achievement of the young people concerned.

156 As they stand, the performance tables draw undue attention to individual institutions, while not presenting data on area-wide or partnership performance – issues that are also of concern to the fulfilment of the government's educational targets. We therefore suggest that area-based data should be introduced, based on LSC boundaries. While we acknowledge that school and college catchment areas span LSC boundaries, given that all LSCs will have similar boundary issues, we believe that such data would nonetheless provide a useful measure of performance across areas.

157 Finally, to promote the proposed Matriculation Diploma, we urge that this should also be included in performance tables, and that the government's intention to do so should be announced as early as possible.

Question 40

Do you agree with our proposals for recording the performance of AS (paragraph 7.19)?

Yes

158 The proposal to count the achievement of AS before age 16 within the secondary school tables from 2003 primarily concerns provision outside our post-16 remit. Nonetheless, we support this intention as being consistent with our view that the widest possible range of learner achievement should be incorporated.

Question 41

How would you propose that the performance tables deal with achievements of those who take GCSE or equivalent qualifications up to a year later than age 16 (paragraph 7.20)?

159 In line with the principles that we feel should guide the design of the performance tables, we suggest the inclusion of a measure of learners taking Level 2 qualifications, at least up to a year later than age 16, and preferably up to 19. It is important to recognise that some young people may quite sensibly undertake Level 2 qualifications at 18 or 19 – not because they have failed previously, but because they have engaged in a 'lateral progression' suited to their personal learning and career aspirations. The achievement of these types of learner needs to be recognised.

Question 42

Do you support the proposal to change the performance indicators for schools and colleges at age 18 to reflect achievement of Levels 2 and 3 (paragraph 7.23)?

Yes

160 We welcome the proposal to focus on the percentage of students achieving qualifications at Level 2 (intermediate) or Level 3 (advanced), and to report the new indicators alongside the existing point score indicators, to provide a rounded picture of institutional performance. Though not mentioned explicitly within this chapter of the Green Paper, we also strongly support the progressive introduction to the tables of measures of value added, as indicated in the recently issued DfES consultation document *Publication of school and college performance tables in 2002*. Taken together, we believe that these steps will do much to assist end users' valid interpretation of the tables by facilitating fairer comparisons.

161 We do have concerns, however, about one aspect of the proposal as it appears. Paragraph 7.22 states that 'the focus is on the percentage of students who *complete a two-year course of study* and who as a consequence attain qualifications at either Level 2 or Level 3' (our italics). This implies that achievement will not be recognised in respect of any learners who leave school or college before the end of 2 years, but having nevertheless acquired qualifications during the time they were on-course.

162 Although we support incentives to institutions to retain learners until normal course completion dates, it does not seem sensible to exclude from the tables real achievements in the meantime, especially as many learners will have achieved AS qualifications after 1 year of study. For some learners, it may be a legitimate and sensible decision at that stage for them, say, to enter full-time employment while they study towards a vocational qualification at Level 3 or Level 4. Others may not require the whole of a 2-year course to achieve qualifications at Level 2 or Level 3. A coherent course of study may comprise a number of qualifications, sometimes involving different levels. Institutions should not be penalised in the performance tables for facilitating that kind of appropriate choice.

Question 43

What further measures would help to support improvement in the FE sector (paragraphs 7.33–7.38)?

163 We support the intention to raise standards of educational attainment, and welcome the recognition that FE colleges are fundamental to the delivery of the proposals contained within the Green Paper. We agree that sustained endeavour is needed to raise standards in colleges.

164 Through the work of the Raising Quality and Achievement Programme[6] and a range of other LSDA professional development activities we have developed a good understanding about what works to improve quality.

165 There are key messages from this evidence base.

- The need for substantial improvement in the quality of leadership in the sector, specifically the quality of those aspiring to college leadership, the effectiveness of the selection process by governors and the in-service training of principals.
- The importance of institutional 'ownership' of the quality improvement process: there is some concern that the extent of external regulation and review arrangements could discourage institutions from taking ownership and responsibility for raising standards.
- The significant impact of institutional ethos, systems, procedures and practices on student achievement. In particular the relationship between teachers and learners. Evidence[7] indicates that, at the most, differences in the characteristics of the student intake can account for only half of the differences in levels of achievement between the best and worse achieving colleges.
- The importance of raising staff morale, given the strong positive correlation between some aspects of staff satisfaction and student satisfaction. Evidence[8] indicates that staff satisfaction is likely to be influenced by a clear sense of institutional purpose.

166 While we recognise that there is much that can be done to raise standards in colleges, however, we would equally stress the importance of the context in which colleges are operating. Colleges need clear definitions of measures of success and to work closely with the Local LSCs to set targets for improvements. Funding incentives linked to achievement of improvement targets could be a powerful device to drive improvement.

Chapter 8

Implementation

Question 44

Do you agree with the timetable indicated (Appendix 1)?

No

167 On balance we feel that the timetable may be ambitious. It is important to learn the lessons of over-hasty implementation, and to ensure that adequate time is available to take on board evidence from evaluation of the pathfinders. The pathfinders will be testing out complex implementation issues such as collaborative delivery between institutions, within the context of existing reforms and the emergence of the LSC network with its new role in planning and funding post-16 learning.

168 The scale of systems change and the complexity this creates for evaluation should not therefore be under-estimated. It will be critically important to have criteria against which to evaluate practice, and a clear specification of research questions that need to be answered through the pathfinder stage.

169 In addition, we recommend that a very detailed analysis of the costs of national roll out need to be carried out during the pathfinder phase to inform plans for roll out. (We explore this in more detail in response to question 46 below.)

170 Given the level of complexity and the timescales proposed, adequate opportunity for feedback from the pathfinders to inform roll out in 2005/06 must be a priority.

171 There is also a danger that, given the scope of the Green Paper consultation, the government may not be given a clear agenda for detailed reform. We therefore urge the government to view this consultation as the first stage of a longer process of engaging key stakeholders, including employers and higher education as well as the general public and young people themselves, in developing a detailed long-term model for change. This needs to be factored into the timescale for implementation.

Question 45

Do you support our proposals for pathfinders (paragraphs 8.7–8.10)?

Yes

172 We welcome the proposals for pathfinders, and in particular their emphasis on:

- testing a range of ideas and new models
- identifying and overcoming barriers
- looking at the financial implications.

173 A key issue in our view will be to ensure that there are clear links to other, already-planned developments in the curriculum such as:

- increased flexibility 14–16 programme
- post-16 citizenship development projects
- Progress File development projects and roll out
- Key Skills Support Programme.

174 All these strands have a significant impact on the 14–19 curriculum and developments should be linked. For example developments in the wider activities strand of the Matriculation Diploma cannot be fully explored without reference to the experiences and lessons learnt from the post-16 citizenship and key skills development. In addition, the implications of Howard Davies' recent report *A review of enterprise and the economy in education*[9] need to be taken into account.

175 As the paper indicates, collaboration between organisations will be more established in some areas than in others, and will face distinctive development needs. The extent to which employers are involved will vary – for example, in economically disadvantaged areas, whether urban or rural, there may be few large firms, therefore learning providers will have particular difficulties in developing sufficient links with employers. The level of collaboration between the school / college sector and the private provider network will also vary greatly. Voluntary and community-based organisations may be learning providers in their own right, or have potential to contribute to learning pathways for 14–19 year olds (for example through work experience). Rural areas are likely to have distinctive problems of location and travel to resolve.

176 The 101 Learning Partnerships have made progress in developing collaboration between providers, across phases of learning and with other local organisations. Though their overall impact has been variable, their success in promoting provider collaboration was recognised in the recent Ministerial review, which redefined this aspect of their work as one of the two new 'core roles' for Learning Partnerships. Some Learning Partnerships have already been active in responding to the 14–19 Green Paper proposals. The Learning Partnerships therefore have the potential to stimulate and strengthen collaboration on the development of coherent learning pathways for 14–19 year olds.

177 These factors reinforce the value of testing different models of partnership and establishing best practice. All the lessons from partnership working demonstrate that partnerships need time and support to evolve – they do not become successful overnight, hence the importance of building in sufficient lead-in time for a national roll out.

Question 46

Are there aspects other than those mentioned which should be covered by the pathfinders?

178 We welcome the emphasis on the range of organisations that need to be involved in the pathfinders. We support, in particular, the intention to gather evidence through the pathfinders on the financial implications of the proposals. We consider it vital that this aspect is explored in detail in advance of full roll out. There are management and cost implications associated with offering increased choice of programmes, with enabling acceleration and with delivering more individualised programmes within a single institution. (See further detail in our response to Chapter 5, question 35.)

179 There are also additional management and cost implications associated with delivering these new opportunities through collaboration between providers. These relate in particular to complex issues of apportionment of costs and diseconomies of scale. Essentially, if a school transfers students to a college for a day or so per week, there are minimal economies associated with teaching time, unlikely to be sufficiently sustained or substantial to allow reduction in teaching staff or other resources (accommodation, student support services, library facilities, etc). There will also be additional costs in terms of staff time for liaison and planning with the partner institution. For the college, there are additional costs in terms of set-up (for example staff development, liaison, planning) and ongoing costs (tuition, administration and support for learners).

180 There will also be costs associated with travel both in terms of the provision and supervision of transport, and in terms of the time taken in transfer.

181 To move forward from the pathfinders to full implementation, analysis will also be needed of the following:

- recurrent and set-up costs
- the costs of scaling up to national delivery
- the sustainability of pathfinder activity beyond seedcorn funding.

182 Clarity and realism about the nature of management and cost implications should therefore be a key focus for pathfinders and be taken into account in reviewing the specification of the entitlement that should be available. In our view, it would be preferable for the entitlement to be universal, but realistic, rather than aspirational and unevenly available.

Question 47

Do you have a view on the way students attending both schools and college should be funded (paragraphs 8.12–8.13)?

183 The question of how students attending both school and college should be funded is one of the most difficult, but must be resolved if effective collaboration is to be achieved. As indicated in our response to the previous question, there are likely to be significant additional costs associated with collaborative arrangements of this kind. Exporting a number of students to an FE college for part of a week will yield only minimal cost reduction for a school due to fixed costs, but it will create additional expenditure for the college in making appropriate provision.

184 It needs to be recognised therefore that collaborative provision and individualised programmes are simply more expensive than the 'batch production' model employed for much of education. Splitting existing levels of funding between institutions is unlikely to be adequate. We recommend therefore that pathfinders explore the costs as a priority to identify these more precisely. In addition, the pathfinders should test out the feasibility of giving LSCs specific funding to support these additional costs.

Question 48

Do you support the ways we wish to encourage collaboration (paragraphs 8.15–8.16)?

Yes with reservations

185 We do not agree with the view expressed in the Green Paper that 'there is no disincentive to collaboration in the performance tables' (paragraph 8.14). Performance tables that encourage providers to maximise individual performance inevitably affect behaviours and will play a part in how players approach 14–19 partnerships. However, we welcome the intention to extend the range of achievement recorded in performance tables, and the longer term intention to develop value-added data. (See our response to question 39 in Chapter 7 for further details.)

186 We note the significant proposal that '*the parent institution is responsible for ensuring that its students receive high-quality education or training wherever it takes place*' (paragraph 8.14). This suggests that the relationship between the parent and delivery institution will be along the lines of a franchise arrangement. We suggest that this will put added strain on the collaborative partnership relationship between organisations. Moreover, parent institutions will not have the necessary powers to take on this role. We therefore suggest that it would be more appropriate to rely upon the quality and provider review systems of Local LSCs and the inspectorate to ensure the quality of provision.

187 In addition, we suggest that there is a disincentive to collaboration inherent in the funding methodology for schools and colleges that needs to be addressed. When 'funding follows the learner' there is a powerful financial disincentive for institutions to collaborate. This already leads, in some areas, to inappropriate recruitment practices by institutions and to the withholding of information about options at other centres. If schools see collaboration as a means of losing funding there will inevitably be resistance, even though it may not be articulated in these terms. This factor is of course compounded by the degree of financial pressure under which institutions now operate.

188 There are alternatives to funding systems driven by learner numbers that need to be explored as part of this initiative. One method, used in the past by LEAs for sixth form funding in particular, was to fund a curriculum offer without precise reference to the numbers recruited. This type of 'entitlement' funding might suit the 14–16 phase.

Question 49

Are there additional ways in which collaboration could be encouraged?

189 In addition to the links that individual providers will develop with their partners as they build new learning pathways for 14–19 year olds, more general encouragement should be given to creating strong foundations for continued collaboration across the board, in the best interests of learners and communities. Learning Partnerships have exercised this role with financial support from government. It will be important to build on the networks already created by successful Learning Partnerships and to enable their work to continue.

190 Responsibilities in relation to 14–19 provision reside with a number of agencies, LEAs, LSCs and Ofsted. Coordination between these agencies will be essential to minimise any confusion at the boundaries of these different roles. It is also important to be clear about which organisation should have a strategic overview of how well the local 14–19 pathways and the underpinning collaboration are working.

191 Removing disincentives to collaboration will be helpful; however, it may also be necessary to create positive incentives to collaborate, both for learning providers and for employers.

192 The Green Paper refers to professional development for teachers to enable them to deliver qualifications to a wider age range. The proposed collaborative arrangements raise additional implications for staff development.

- Staff in schools and colleges may need help to develop the skills needed to work productively with other organisations, particularly where close links have not been established in the past. Skills in working as part of a multi-agency team may be required.
- A range of skills is likely to be needed, including, for example, skills in working with other organisations to develop curriculum options and learner support.
- Engaging employers effectively in work-related learning calls for particular skills and aptitudes on the part of learning providers.[10] Staff development as well as time and appropriate materials will be needed.
- There may be a need for significant awareness-raising about the range of other local organisations that could help broaden the learning and support options for 14–19 year olds. Our research, *Back on track'*,[11] included a recommendation that cross-sector staff development workshops should be organised to promote a better understanding of the roles, responsibilities and cultures of different professionals to develop skills in joint working. In addition it recommended that a multi-agency approach to designing flexible options for Key stage 4 should be considered, drawing on the specialist skills of a range of professionals.

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1 See Davies P. *Learning and earning: the impact of paid employment on young people in full-time education*. FEDA, 1999. This research highlighted the fact that young people now work significant hours alongside their post-16 studies.

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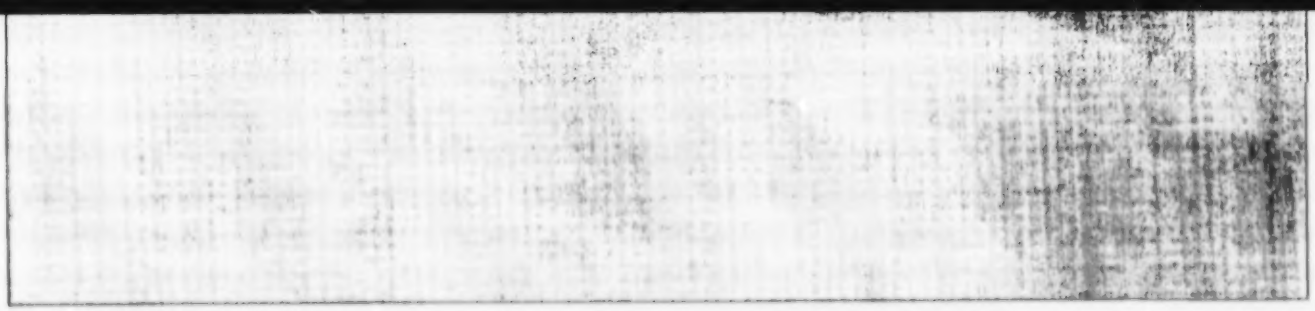

This paper sets out the Learning and Skills Development Agency's response to the Green Paper consultation *14–19 extending opportunities, raising standards*. The original consultation document can be found on the internet at: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19greenpaper/

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